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GEORGE FOX
and
THE LIGHT WITHIN
1650-1660

By
RACHEL HADLEY KING

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To my parents whose loving patience and generosity
through the long years of graduate study made
possible the writing of this book.

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FOREWORD

At last here is an illuminating and adequate treatment of the *Light Within* as George Fox used the term. Throughout the entire history of Quakerism it has done service as a constantly recurrent phrase, but when anyone asked what the phrase meant, the answer was elusive, or it was an "escape-mechanism" in the words: "I will lend thee Barclay's Apology." The trouble with that answer was that the *Apology* gave Barclay's view of the *Light Within*, not George Fox's.

To the Calvinist it was a major heresy, and four Quakers were hung in Boston because they avowed their faith in a *Light Within*. Through all the controversies within the Society of Friends both opponents have held to it—Elias Hicks and the orthodox Elders: John Wilbur and Joseph John Gurney. But it was all the time such a vague phrase that each contestant could give his own peculiar color of meaning, and both could claim to be true lineal descendants of George Fox. Throughout it all nobody made a serious effort to find out what this unique prophet in the seventeenth century really meant by his discovery.

I know only too well how few members of the Society of Friends have any vital interest in the historical origins of their own faith and how even fewer there are who are ready to take the pains to discover what the central message of that faith meant to its founders. There are, however, a few who care intensely and there are many outside the fold who are

interested in these issues, and there will continue to be a group of scholars who are eager for the truth in these matters. There will be now, and for many years to come, a select few who will give thanks for a book like this, and it will stimulate other studies.

One of the most significant features of this book is the careful and penetrating study of the differences and likenesses between Calvinism (*i.e.*, Puritanism) and Quakerism. I have nowhere else seen the differentiation so specifically drawn and I have nowhere else found the "Calvinistic overtones" in early Quakerism so admirably presented. Was George Fox a Puritan? Was George Fox a thoroughgoing opponent of Puritanism? The answer in this book is clear as a bell.

Again, nearly everybody has seen that George Fox was a *mystic*. But that is a word of many meanings. There are good mystics and there are bad mystics. What type of mystic was George Fox? Was he in the perennial "succession," or was he of a new order? How did it happen that, while mystics are usually individualists, he became an organizer and the founder of a continuous movement? All these questions are clearly answered in this book.

One of the most valuable features of Rachel King's book is the simplicity of her method. Out of all the confusions of Fox's use of the *Light Within*, she finds two central principles underlying all the uses of the great phrase. She has caught the significance of "Occam's Razor." Occam's Razor, as some will remember, shaved away all unnecessary interpretation and brought the problem down to its bare simplicities. So here we have utter simplicity. The *Light Within* is that principle within us which shows us

what is evil. And secondly the *Light Within* is that principle within us which brings us into *unity*, unity with God and unity with men. The book is in the main the interpretation of these two principles and a skilful reduction of the confusions to this simplicity of interpretation.

The reader must not, however, expect "Occam's Razor" to cut an easy primrose path for his feet to walk in. This is a Doctor's Thesis. It is a learned book by a scholar and it does not have the qualities of a Primer. The reader must be somewhat a "Delian diver." He must be ready to go deep, but if he will do that, he is pretty sure to come up with his pearl.

RUFUS M. JONES

Haverford, Pa.

PREFACE

The following study has been limited to a discussion of the place of the *light within* in Fox's thought during the years 1650-1660. These years were the early formative period of Quakerism. In the mid-seventeenth century there was danger that the emphasis upon the adequacy of individual inspiration would degenerate into Ranterism. Fox checked this danger. Even in the early period of his teaching he shows that he has found a way of so defining the light of personal inspiration that it is safeguarded from the vagaries of undisciplined individualism, and made capable of being used as a group authority, that is, as an authority for the church.

We are fortunate in possessing three extensive sources for our understanding of Fox's thought during the Commonwealth period. One is the Cambridge 1911 edition first volume of the *Journal*,¹

¹ This edition is printed *verbatim et literatim* from the original MS.

The *Journal* was put by Fox into its present form between the years 1673 and 1677. In spite of this late date I believe for three reasons that "i" is a valid source for Fox's thought in the 1650-1660 decade. In the first place about one third of "i" consists of contemporary (*i.e.*, 1650-1660) MSS which Fox has embedded in the narrative. In the second place we know that Fox was not without earlier written records for the narrative portion of "i," because of the number of narratives in "i" which, as William Braithwaite points out, have a closely synoptic relation to those in the *Short Journal*. The *Short Journal* we know was written by 1664. In the third place the narrative in "i" has local color, reports of conversations, pithy characterizations of people, and intimate knowledge of details of time and events, all of which suggest that Fox was not depending years later merely upon his memory when "i" was put into its present form.

The opening pages of the *Journal* MS are now lost and so do not appear in "i." For this portion of the *Journal* we have to depend upon the first (Ellwood's 1694) edition, and I do it here by references

which shows us his teaching in action. Another is *The Great Mystery*, which was first published in 1659, and shows us Fox's ideas as he expresses them in controversy with his theological opponents. The third is the *Collection of Many Select and Christian Epistles*, in which Fox's thought is shown in pastoral letters to sympathetic Quaker groups. These three books are referred to in the footnotes as "i," "iii," and "vii" respectively. See the Bibliography. In the text, for the sake of brevity, "vii" is spoken of simply as the *Letters*.

In many instances throughout the footnotes of this dissertation the line reference as well as the page reference is given. The line numbering is obtained by making a numbered line marker corresponding to a full page of print of any given volume. Line *one* of the marker is then laid immediately beneath the first line of printing on any page, and the line numbers determined by the position of the line on the page. The line reference is always preceded

to the stereotype edition (pp. 55-80) which is based upon Ellwood's. I personally believe for three reasons that Fox in composing the opening pages of the *Journal* (stereotype edition, pp. 55:1-76:26) was relying entirely upon memory. In the first place this portion is a serene account of a period of subjective storm and stress, and it lacks "i's" local color, reports of conversations, pithy characterizations, etc. In the second place it contains certain reminiscent phrases such as, "I had an uncle there, one Pickering, a Baptist; the Baptists were tender then." (See also the opening paragraph of the stereotype edition.) In the third place there is not the reason for Fox's keeping a contemporary record of his earliest years that there is for his keeping a contemporary record of the portion of his life covered by "i." We find this reason in "vii," letters CXL and CXLI, in which in 1657 Fox advised Quakers throughout England to keep a written record of the sufferings they were forced to endure for their religion. Now the first severe suffering Fox was forced to undergo because of his religious beliefs was his Nottingham imprisonment (1649), and this incident begins on p. 1 of the *Short Journal* and in the stereotype edition on p. 76:27. That is to say, the *Short Journal* parallels only material found after this stereotype edition pp. 55:1-76:26 section.

by a colon. Thus "iii, 305:16-24" is *The Great Mystery*, page 305, lines 16 through 24; and "iii, 305:16-306:2" is *The Great Mystery*, page 305, line 16 through page 306, line 2.

I wish to thank Mr. J. Henry Bartlett and Mr. William B. Harvey of the Friends' Book Committee, and Professor Virginia Corwin, Miss Victoria Freeman, Professor Martha Jane Gibson, Professor H. Richard Niebuhr, and Professor Luella M. Wright for their interest, information, advice, and careful correction of the manuscript and proof. I have built chiefly against the background of the scholarship of Doctor Evelyn Underhill Moore, Professor Roland H. Bainton, and Professor Rufus M. Jones. In addition to that scholarly debt I wish to express my personal gratitude to Professor Bainton for the unfailing patience and consideration with which he watches over dissertations committed to his care; and to Professor Jones for his kindness in checking a difficult point for me when he was in London, and for his continued interest in the book from the time of my first gathering material for it until its publication. I also wish to express my appreciation to the staffs of the Henry E. Huntington, Haverford College, and Harvard and especially Yale University Libraries for the courtesies they have shown me, and to the Columbia University Press, the Macmillan Company, and Houghton Mifflin Company for permission to quote from their publications. The following account of *George Fox and the Light Within, 1650-1660* was presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Ph.D. degree at Yale University.

R. H. K.

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CHAPTER I

THE NEED FOR AUTHORITY

As the Roman church elaborated its doctrine and reached its golden age of temporal power, the emphasis on personal experiential religion which had never been absent, began to show itself within the church as a movement which, while acknowledging the church's authority, was sometimes at variance with it. This movement can be seen in the Waldenses, in St. Francis and the Spiritual Franciscans, the Parisian group following Amaury, the "Free Spirit" teaching among the groups of Beghards and Beguines especially in the Netherlands, in Eckhart, Rulman Merswin, Tauler, Suso, Ruysbroek, the author of the *Theologia Germanica*, Thomas à Kempis and the Brethren of the Common Life, and in England in Wyclif and the Lollards.¹

Many people hoped that the Protestant Reformation with its fundamental belief in the unmediated relation of man to Christ, and its renunciation of Rome, would end the tension between outward religious authority and the authority of the individual spiritual experience. But this hope proved false, for the leading groups in Protestantism wisely substituted the Bible as the external authority in the place of the church of Rome. The unique value of the Bible as a source book for religious knowledge,

¹ Rufus M. Jones, *Studies in Mystical Religion* (London, 1909).

the Protestants' need of some objective standard around which to rally, and their need of an infallible authority to use in combating the claims of the mother church made this almost inevitable. Not only, however, did Protestantism find itself embarrassed by its own lack of unanimity in interpreting the Bible, but it was troubled also by the spiritual danger of the legalism that the excessive reliance upon scripture fostered. The Reformation had intended to remove the hindering external authorities that stood between the soul of the individual believer and God. Its immediate effect had been less a universal spiritual regeneration than the substitution of a new external authority—the Bible according to one of several newly orthodox interpretations backed by the state. Even Luther had had moments of discouragement because of the meagerness of the moral improvement that followed his successful changes in doctrine and policy.²

The interest in individual inspiration and inward authority was, however, by no means snuffed out. It had been to a certain extent a presupposition in the young Luther's reform³ and it continued to make itself felt as a left-wing movement within Protestantism, among a group of men sometimes spoken of as "Enthusiasts" and sometimes as "Spirituals."⁴ Moreover, after the success of the Reformation had

² Margaret A. Currie (trans.), *The Letters of Martin Luther* (London, 1908), pp. 263, 333, 446, 447, 455.

³ Rufus M. Jones, *Spiritual Reformers in the 16th and 17th Centuries* (London, 1914), pp. 12, 13; Reinhold Seeberg, *Textbook of the History of Doctrines* (Revised, 1904), vol. ii, pp. 279-281; Martin Luther, *A Treatise on Christian Liberty* (*Works of Martin Luther*, Philadelphia, 1916, vol. ii), pp. 312-316, 324, 325, 348.

⁴ Rufus M. Jones, *Spiritual Reformers in the 16th and 17th Centuries* (London, 1914), pp. 31, 32.

proved that the Christian world could be divided, it became somewhat easier for nonconformity and further schism to flourish. By the seventeenth century the ideas of the German sixteenth century Spiritual Reformers had filtered into England and were reinforcing the still existing impetus to inward authority in religion that Lollardry had created.⁵ The outstanding exponent of this English movement of Spiritual Reform is George Fox, who founded Quakerism during the Commonwealth period.⁶ Fox is thus not an isolated genius. He gathered up ideas of the inwardness of religion and religious authority which had appeared on the Continent and were appearing in England. But as we shall see he so selects and uses these ideas that he avoids certain pitfalls that beset a complete reliance upon individual inspiration, and he succeeds in making of individual inspiration an authority for the church as well as for the individual.

The idea of an inner light is not new with Fox. It is found among the German Spiritual Reformers. The idea of the inner light or inner word is found in well developed form in Sebastian Franck,⁷ and before him Hans Denck had proclaimed it.⁸ The ideas

⁵ Rufus M. Jones, *Studies in Mystical Religion* (London, 1909), pp. 366, 367, 396. Rufus M. Jones, *Spiritual Reformers in the 16th and 17th Centuries* (London, 1914), p. 266.

⁶ Rufus M. Jones, *Studies in Mystical Religion* (London, 1909), p. 482; Wm. C. Braithwaite, *The Beginnings of Quakerism* (London, 1912).

⁷ Rufus M. Jones, *Spiritual Reformers in the 16th and 17th Centuries* (London, 1914), pp. 52, 53; S. Franck, *The Forbidden Fruit* (1640), pp. 111, 155, 165.

⁸ Rufus M. Jones, *Spiritual Reformers in the 16th and 17th Centuries* (London, 1914), p. 24; Adolf Metus Schwindt, *Hans Denck ein Vorkämpfer undogmatischem Christentums* (Habertshof), pp. 34-37.

of Franck are especially important in that they probably had a direct influence upon Fox's thought. The English edition (1640) of Franck's *Forbidden Fruit* is one of the very few Continental works listed in the partial inventory that remains of the books that Fox possessed at his death.⁹

Franck united "the intellectual ideals of the Humanist with the experience and attitude of the Mystic."¹⁰ Like the mystic he turned a man within himself to find the divine,¹¹ but unlike the mystic the goal was not primarily an extraction of man from the world so that the being of man could return homeward into union with the being of God, but was rather primarily a union with God which stressed the harmonious relationship of the divine and human wills.¹² The religious experience was one of steady illumination not one of intermittent ecstasy.¹³ The experi-

⁹ *The Forbidden Fruit or a Treatise of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil* (1640), by August: Eluthenius [pseudonym]. The other important work is *Den Spiegel der Gerechticheit, dorch den Geist der Liefßden, unde den vorgodeden Mensch H[enrick] N[iclaes]*. . . . "So far as is known he cannot have read the volume himself, but if he used it must have made use of a translator." There is no known printed English translation of this book. H. N. was the founder of the Family of Love. See John L. Nickalls, "George Fox's Library," pp. 3-21, in *The Journal of the Friends Historical Society*, vol. xxviii, 1931.

¹⁰ Reprinted from Rufus M. Jones, *Spiritual Reformers in the 16th and 17th Centuries* (London, 1914), p. 46, by permission of the Macmillan Co.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 54.

¹² Rufus M. Jones, *Spiritual Reformers in the 16th and 17th Centuries* (London, 1914), pp. 56, 57; S. Franck, *The Forbidden Fruit* (1640), p. 6; S. Franck, *Paradoxa* (Jena, 1909), no. 147b, "Eigener Wille brennt in der Hölle"; nos. 269, 270, "Allein im Willen, Affekt und Herzen ist beides: die Sünde und die Frömmigkeit."

¹³ Rufus M. Jones, *Spiritual Reformers in the 16th and 17th Centuries* (London, 1914), pp. 53, 54.

ence was initiated by a man's pivotal turning of his will to this divine within himself to live in and obey it."¹⁴ All people who obey the inner light or word, in whatsoever religious group they may be, are members of the true church.¹⁵ This type of thought gives a third answer to the question, Where shall a man find religious authority? The Roman answer had been *in the church*. Orthodox Protestantism's had been *in the Bible*. The Spiritual Reformers' was *in the divine Word within a man's own soul*.

But there were limitations within Franck's view. He had found an authority for the individual but he had not found an authority for the church.¹⁶ The reason for this is twofold: the lack of a sufficiently objective definition of the light, and the lack of a clear-cut practical distinction between the divine and its human medium. He had failed to define¹⁷ the inner light or word in a set of simple terms that would sufficiently objectify what is wholly subjective,

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 56, 57; S. Franck, *Paradoxa* (Jena, 1909), no. 259, "Alle Werke vor der Wiedergeburt sind Sünde."

¹⁵ Roland H. Bainton, editor, *Concerning Heretics* (New York, 1935), p. 97; Rufus M. Jones, *Spiritual Reformers in the 16th and 17th Centuries* (London, 1914), pp. 52, 58, 59; S. Franck, *The Forbidden Fruit* (1640), p. 156; S. Franck, *Paradoxa* (Jena, 1909), no. 82, "Gott ist auch der Heiden Gott."

¹⁶ S. Franck, *Paradoxa* (Jena, 1909), no. 233, "Das Evangelium, der Heilige Geist, leidet kein Konzil, keinen Bedacht, Ratschlag und keine Auslegung der Menschen. Die Kirche, eine Lilie unter den Dornen, wird unter den Heiden zerstreut und bis zum Ende zertreten."

¹⁷ S. Franck, *Paradoxa* (Jena, 1909), no. 280, "Das Wort, welches ein Licht, Geist und Leben ist, leidet keines Menschen Licht oder Glosse." For an example of the way Franck's definitions fail to get down to terms of social experience see S. Franck, *The Forbidden Fruit* (1640), p. 122, "Now what cometh not from God is sinne, and not good; and what shineth not from his Light, is altogether darkness, although it seeme to be Light and Wisdome."

to make it possible for large numbers of people to agree upon it and rally to it. For example Franck,¹⁸ and Fox also, defined the inner light as *Christ*. Valuable as such a definition was, it actually did not go far toward solving the problem of where the church could find a final authority for itself, because the meaning of the word "Christ" is either a highly subjective matter of individual interpretation, or else the meaning of the word "Christ" derives its content from scripture, in which case the final authority for the church is traced back to the Bible.

Fox was later to solve the problem by emphasizing two practical working definitions of the light: namely that it is "that which shows a man evil" (ethical evil) and that it is "that in which is unity."¹⁹ Since by evil he meant breaking the Ten Commandments and not loving God and one's neighbor,²⁰ he was referring to ideas so widely accepted that for practical purposes his two definitions of the light were made in terms of the nature of the human experience itself.

There is a reason why Franck does not make the ethical definition of the light. In *The Forbidden*

¹⁸ S. Franck, *The Forbidden Fruit* (1640), p. 157.

¹⁹ See Chap. iv, note 1.

²⁰ Fox's basic emphasis upon the ethical connotations of the light is nowhere better seen than in his short writing *To All That Would Know the Way to the Kingdom, Whether They Be in Forms, Without Forms, or Got Above All Forms* (*Works*, Philadelphia, 1831, vol. iv). This was first printed in 1655 and is one of Fox's earliest expositions of his views. Which see p. 21:19-30. See also vii, p. 18:7-19; and Fox, *Trying of Spirits* (*Works*, Philadelphia, 1831, vol. vi), p. 220:21-32. "The light which every one that cometh into the world is enlightened with, is not conscience, for the light was before anything was made, or conscience named: So the light is that which exerciseth the conscience towards God, and towards man, where it is loved, . . ." iii, p. 518:40-43.

Fruit he says that the sin of Adam and of mankind is self-will. His emphasis on this is so great in this book that he makes the proper attitude of the devout person one of quietistic receptivity.²¹ He has so emphasized the eating of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil as the beginning of man's misfortunes²² that he would have had great difficulty in defining the saving light within as "that which shows a man evil."

The inadequacy of Franck's thought for purposes of group authority is also traceable to his lack of a clear-cut practical distinction between the divine and its human medium. This is another aspect of his lack of objective definition of the inner light. It is also another aspect of his thought, which is not self-consistent.²³ For Franck the Word of God "is a divine reality, an eternal and self-existent activity, opening upward into all the resources of God, and at the same time forming the fundamental nature and ground-structure of the soul."²⁴ On the basis of such a point of view a person would have difficulty in knowing in a practical social situation how far his ideas were to be equated with the divine. This would at least make

²¹ "but while he doth nothing, knowes & desires nothing, but keeping a holy Sabbath or rest; dyes wholly unto himselfe; and being void of will or witt, resignes himselfe over unto God, and permits him to know and doe in him, what, when, and how he will. . . . Standing water is easily made bright with the beames of the Sunne." S. Franck, *The Forbidden Fruit* (1640), pp. 77, 106. See also pp. 20, 22 of the same book.

²² S. Franck, *The Forbidden Fruit* (1640), pp. 79, 97.

²³ Roland H. Bainton, editor, *Concerning Heretics* (New York, 1935), pp. 93-99.

²⁴ Reprinted from Rufus M. Jones, *Spiritual Reformers in the 16th and 17th Centuries* (London, 1914), p. 56, by permission of the Macmillan Co.; see also pp. 53, 54.

difficult group consensus of opinion if the inward divine were the only authority. Franck could say that "although the word of God is altogether one, and undivided, yet how much thereof a man hath received by faith, so much of it is his; and this is his word."²⁵ He could also speak of the spiritual experience as a "journey" back to God.²⁶ Franck's teaching showed how one could "make a cloister of his own heart."²⁷ It did not bring those living in the light together in a new sect.²⁸ "In one passage Franck voices a genuine doubt as to the ability of even the twice-born man to attain perfect certainty. 'We know in part. Socrates was right, that we know only that we do not know. We may be heretics quite as much as our opponents.'"²⁹ The ethical emphasis of the humanist, which is to be found in Franck although it is not theoretically a part of his idea of the inward light, comes to the fore when he remarks, "'Every man is dear to me who pants after God and lives uprightly. I do not ask what he believes, but how he lives.'"³⁰

²⁵ S. Franck, *The Forbidden Fruit* (1640), p. 167.

²⁶ Rufus M. Jones, *Spiritual Reformers in the 16th and 17th Centuries* (London, 1914), p. 52.

²⁷ Reprinted from Roland H. Bainton, editor, *Concerning Heretics* (New York, 1935), p. 104, by permission of Columbia University Press.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 103; Rufus M. Jones, *Spiritual Reformers in the 16th and 17th Centuries* (London, 1914), pp. 47 and note 1, 49.

²⁹ Reprinted from Roland H. Bainton, editor, *Concerning Heretics* (New York, 1935), p. 102, by permission of Columbia University Press; quoted from S. Franck, *Chronica Zeytbüch und geschycht bibel von anbegyn biss inn diss gegenwertig M. D. xxxj jar . . . 1531* (At the end Strassburg), Vorrede, f. aiiij.

³⁰ Roland H. Bainton, editor, *Concerning Heretics* (New York, 1935), p. 102, quoted from Alfred Hegler, *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Mystik in der Reformationszeit*, ed. Walther Köhler. Berlin, 1906. Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte (Leipzig, 1903/4—), Ergänzungsband I, p. 194.

The same problem of infallibility is found a century later in the point of view of the English Seeker John Saltmarsh. Saltmarsh describes the religious life as a gradual weaning away from religious symbols into a more and more purely spiritual religion,³¹ and like Franck he places the authority for the individual in the inward light.³² Saltmarsh can refer to himself and his opponents as being "enemies through the several measures of light we see by."³³

Four other pitfalls beset the problem of the definition of the light and these difficulties are exemplified in the views of Mrs. Anne Hutchinson, Gerrard Winstanley, the Family of Love, and the English Arminian Baptists.

The ideas of Mrs. Hutchinson, who caused such a commotion in Boston between the years 1636 and 1638,³⁴ are based on a theory of thoroughgoing predestination.³⁵ She is related to the religious movement we are discussing by her emphasis on the "testimony of the Spirit, and voice unto the soul, merely immediate, without any respect unto, or concurrence with the word."³⁶ (*i.e.*, Scripture). In her thought God is considered so entirely other than man, and human nature is considered so completely unimportant that moral values lose their meaning and there

³¹ John Saltmarsh, *Sparkles of Glory, or Some Beams of the Morning Star* (London, 1647, reprinted for Wm. Pickering, 1847), pp. 50-53.

³² *Ibid.*, pp. 55-60, 93, 157.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 109.

³⁴ *Antinomianism in the Colony of Massachusetts Bay, 1636-1638* (Boston, 1894), p. 16.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 95-124, errors 22, 26, 55, 59, 73.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 95-124, error 40, see also 58, 61.

is a strong tendency to antinomianism.³⁷ In order for the saints to be possessed by Christ, they have to have their human nature so completely negated that it becomes logically impossible to define the indwelling divine in human (*i.e.*, social) terms.³⁸ Thus, as in the case of Franck, the indwelling divine is an authority for the individual but not for the group, although here the problem occurs against the background of a strict predestination theology.

Gerrard Winstanley, the Leveller, was an Englishman of religious sensitivity and ethical-social ideals.³⁹ In the years 1648 and 1649⁴⁰ he published pamphlets that put so much emphasis on the inner light that many people in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries believed that Winstanley was the source of the ideas of Quakerism.⁴¹ But there is a fundamental difference between him and Fox. For, although there is a mystical strain in Winstanley's⁴² temperament, his theory is far more rationalistic than is Fox's. In line with Winstanley's rationalism is his calling God "Reason";⁴³ his cutting loose

³⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 95-124, errors 4, 5, 6, 20, 25, 34, 44, 64, 65, 76, 77, see also pp. 218-220, errors 1, 2, 3.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 95-124, errors 1, 2, 3, 10, 14, 27, 28, 45, 68, 72, 73.

³⁹ There is a collection of Winstanley's pamphlets in the British Museum. They are now extremely rare. The present study is made entirely on the basis of Berens' book which contains so many excerpts from Winstanley's writings that it is valuable as source material. The full title of the book is *The Digger Movement in the Days of the Commonwealth, as Revealed in the Writings of Gerrard Winstanley, the Digger Mystic, and Rationalist, Communist and Social Reformer*, by Lewis H. Berens (London, 1906).

⁴⁰ Lewis H. Berens, *The Digger Movement* (London, 1906), p. 43, note 1.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 49, 50.

⁴² *Ibid.*, pp. 65, 66. From Winstanley, *The New Law of Righteous-*

⁴³ *Ibid.*, pp. 63, 64, based upon Winstanley, *Truth Lifting Its Head Above Scandals*.

from scriptural anchorage by his allegorical interpretation of the Bible;⁴⁴ his belief that when the Spirit ruled in the hearts of men the Bible would cease to be important;⁴⁵ his thinking of the divine Spirit as a kind of X quantity that inspired him, Winstanley, and had inspired "the man Jesus Christ."⁴⁶ Other indications of his rationalistic tendencies are his intense belief in universal salvation;⁴⁷ his dependence on human strength to rid the soul of evil; and his emphasis upon the harmony among the creatures that would result if men put away evil.⁴⁸ Fox, with greater religious insight, always has harmony with God as his primary goal. According to Fox the harmony among men is a result of the religious harmony. Again, Winstanley sometimes teaches that the divine light in man is human reason itself and sometimes that it illumines human reason.⁴⁹ He does obviously think of God as immanent in the non-human creation.⁵⁰ Then Winstanley combines the idea of the divineness of human reason with the idea of the immanence of God in the non-human creation and teaches that if man with his human reason will study the natural world about him he will know God.⁵¹ Winstanley's inner light

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 44, based upon Winstanley, *The Mystery of God Concerning the Whole Creation*.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 64, 66, based upon Winstanley, *Truth Lifting Its Head Above Scandals*, and *New Law of Righteousness*.

⁴⁶ Lewis H. Berens, *The Digger Movement* (London, 1906), p. 61, based upon Winstanley, *The Saints' Paradise*, Chaps. iv, v.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 44, 46, 47, 53.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 60, based upon Winstanley, *The Saints' Paradise*, Chaps. iv, v.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 45, 46, 58, based upon Winstanley, *Truth Lifting Up Its Head Above Scandals*, and *The Saints' Paradise*.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 61, based on Winstanley, *The Saints' Paradise*, Chaps. iv, v.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 209, based upon Winstanley, *Utopia* (1652).

could not serve as a rallying authority for the church because he was veering away from religion into a high-minded secularism.

Fox was able to say that the light is in all men, to define it so that it appears on the surface to resemble human moral judgment, to put great emphasis upon the righting of social wrongs, and yet be primarily religious in his interests and not slip over into rationalism, humanitarianism, and secularism. On the other hand, with all his insistence that the divine is other than the human, Fox never went to the other extreme which underestimates moral values and negates the human.

The third difficulty is exemplified by the Family of Love, a small mystical sect whose ideas had an important leavening effect in England. It had come to England in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries from the Continent. The most important writings of the sect are those of its founder, Henry Nicolaes, of Amsterdam.⁵² "The fundamental doctrine of H. N. and that which was the reason of the existence of the sect was that of Love. He held that Love is the fulfilment of God's will and purpose, 'the greatest thing in the world' . . . 'The Love is the Light of the world.' " Those who live in " 'Love . . . ' 'dwell in the spiritual Land of Peace.' " ⁵³ The

⁵² Rufus M. Jones, *Studies in Mystical Religion* (London, 1909), pp. 428, 432, 440-443, 446, 494.

⁵³ Allen C. Thomas, "The Family of Love, or the Familists" (*Haverford College Studies*, fifth month, 1893), pp. 33, 34, with quotations from H. N., *A Figure of the True and Spiritual Tabernacle*, etc. (London, 1655), To the Reader, 13, 14, 15. See also H[enrik] N[icolaes], *Revelatio Dei*, Chap. xv, paragraph 8; H. N., *Terra Pacis*, Preface paragraph 3; H. N., *The Prophecy of the Spirit of Love* (1574), Chap. vii, paragraph 12.

sect had a complicated hierarchical organization.⁵⁴ Its founder believed himself to be an especially inspired prophet.⁵⁵ Such a claim is one way of meeting the need for an authority for the church, but it is a way that is off the main line of development of the type of religion we are following. The sect was, however, by no means wholly dependent upon the pronouncements of Henry Niclaes. It shows the emphasis upon inward personal experience and inspiration that is typical of the left wing religious movement as a whole. The point that is important for the present discussion is that the Familists defined the inner experience and inspiration in terms of "the Light of Life, the lovely Being of the Love."⁵⁶ Now, although Love as a personal experience may be a complete authority and the fulfilling of the law, it is not by itself, as a doctrine, a sufficient authority for the church, for the very reason that it is so thoroughly a subjective thing. Before it could be by itself an adequate group authority, it would have to be further defined in more objective terms. Fox had caught something of the spirit of the Familists and he often speaks of Friends as "very loving."⁵⁷ But

⁵⁴ Rufus M. Jones, *Studies in Mystical Religion* (London, 1909), p. 433; Allen C. Thomas, "The Family of Love, or the Familists" (*Haverford College Studies*, fifth month, 1893), p. 11.

⁵⁵ H. N., *The Prophecy of the Spirit of Love* (1574), Chap. i, paragraphs 2, 5; H. N., *Evangelium Regni* (translated out of Baselmayne 1575?), Chap. xxxiv, paragraphs 1-4; Allen C. Thomas, "The Family of Love, or the Familists" (*Haverford College Studies*, fifth month, 1893), pp. 8, 10, 12.

⁵⁶ H. N., *The Prophecy of the Spirit of Love* (1574), Chap. vii, paragraph 12; see also H. N., *Terra Pacis* (Translated out of Baselmayne 1574?) Preface p. 4, paragraphs 11-15.

⁵⁷ i, 208:35-209:6; i, 297:23-27. See also vii, 18:40-19:6, which says: "Mind the light, that all may be refreshed one in another, and all in one. And the God of power and love keep all Friends in

when he has to define the light he comes firmly back to the ethical definition: the light is "that which shows a man evil."

More important in England than the Familists were the General or Arminian Baptists. The youthful Fox was undoubtedly influenced by this sect,⁵⁸ and it is known to have been in close touch with early Quakerism.⁵⁹ The Baptists were not quite so much religious free-lances as were Franck, Mrs. Hutchinson, Winstanley, and the Familists. Like the free-lances the Baptists had come to believe that true religion is an act and attitude of a person's own spirit, that nothing whatever is wrought by magic, by sacerdotalism, by rite, or by ceremony.⁶⁰ There was a confidence that regeneration is caused by the inward Word,⁶¹ and that the Bible in itself is dead, that it is only as the Bible is revealed to the reader by the Spirit that it is scripture.⁶² John Smyth, the "Se-Baptist," had held that the regenerate Christian does not need the outward Scriptures and yet that he

power, in love, that there be no surmisings, but pure refreshings in the unlimited love of God, which makes one another known in the conscience, to read one another's hearts: being comprehended into this love, it is inseparable, and all are here one. And keep in the oneness, and note them that cause dissention, contrary to the gospel ye have received; that one pure faith may be held in all, to guide and preserve all in the unity of the spirit and bond of peace; all one family of love, children of one father, and of the household of God."

⁵⁸ *Stereotype Journal* (Philadelphia), p. 57:5-14.

⁵⁹ Robert Barclay, *The Inner Life of the Religious Societies of the Commonwealth* (London, 1877), pp. 295, 296. The Baptists are mentioned many times in Fox's *Journal* and in Norman Penney's (editor) "*The First Publishers of Truth*" (London, 1907).

⁶⁰ Rufus M. Jones, *Studies in Mystical Religion* (London, 1909), pp. 398, 404.

⁶¹ Robert Barclay, *The Inner Life of the Religious Societies of the Commonwealth* (London, 1877), p. 226.

⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 298, based on Daniel Featly, *The Dipper Dipt* (London, 1651, sixth edition). It was originally published in 1645.

can do nothing against the outward Scriptures.⁶³ The belief had also been put forward that Christians might have immediate revelations "besides and above the written word," although inspirations contrary to the Bible should not be relied on.⁶⁴

There was among the Baptists an uneasy combination of the authority of Scripture and the authority of personal revelation.⁶⁵ They had no theory by which the inward authority could be put first unequivocally without slighting the authority of Scripture, which they refused to do. The Baptists had a feeling for or bias toward historical Christianity which is shown both by their dogged clinging to the Bible and, what is another phase of the same thing, by their insistence that the church be reformed according to the Apostolic pattern.⁶⁶

Some of the Baptists, perhaps baffled by the situation of having two authorities, or in despair of ever

⁶³ John Smyth's *Confession of Faith* in 100 propositions, propositions 61 and 63. The Confession is quoted in full in Robert Barclay's *The Inner Life of the Religious Societies of the Commonwealth* (London, 1877), as an appendix to Chap. vi.

⁶⁴ This is the point of view of Hans de Ries, a Waterlander Mennonite of Amsterdam, in his *Dialogue or Conversation Between a Neutralist and a Waterlander Brother*, p. 12, quoted by Robert Barclay *The Inner Life of the Religious Societies of the Commonwealth* (London, 1877), pp. 223-225.

⁶⁵ Nittert Obbes, who opposed Hans de Ries, maintained that . . . " 'the written Word of God, or the Gospel, wheresoever it is read or preached, is the ordinary medium, or instrument, whereby repentance, faith and regeneration are effected,' and that 'ONLY by way of the Holy Scriptures, God, Christ, or the Holy Ghost, reveals and imparts to us everything which we ought to know, to do, to hope, to believe, for our salvation. . . . ' " Robert Barclay, *The Inner Life of the Religious Societies of the Commonwealth* (London, 1877), p. 223, quoted by him from Obbes, *A Spider Hunter* (Amsterdam, 1625), Barclay remarks on the close connection between the Waterlander Mennonites in Amsterdam and the English Baptists, pp. 72, 73, 222-224.

⁶⁶ Rufus M. Jones, *Studies in Mystical Religion* (London, 1909), pp. 370, 401.

finding the true Apostolic church pattern, broke away from the sect and became Seekers.⁶⁷ The Seeker groups did not think of themselves as the church but as interim congregations of those who met together for simple worship or silent waiting upon God until such time as He would see fit to reestablish the true church as a group.⁶⁸

Fox met the Baptist-Seeker situation skillfully. He unequivocally made the light within the ultimate authority for the individual and for the church.⁶⁹ He said the light was wholly divine and he defined the light primarily as that which shows a man evil, meaning that the light invariably shows that such things as not keeping the Ten Commandments and not loving God and one's neighbor are wrong. He further defined it as that which will bring men into an experiential unity with God and through unity with God to unity with their fellow Christians if they turn to

⁶⁷ Rufus M. Jones, *Studies in Mystical Religion* (London, 1909), p. 452, note 3. Robert Barclay says, "Edwards tells us that the sect of 'Seekers greatly increased at this period, Independents Baptists leaving their congregations; not only the people, but the ministers,' " but gives no reference. See *The Inner Life of the Religious Societies of the Commonwealth* (London, 1877), p. 173. Suggestions of some relations between Baptists and Seekers is to be found in Norman Penney (editor) "*The First Publishers of Truth*" (London, 1907), pp. 77, 124, 134, 158. (The same book also refers to Seekers who had broken away from the "national worship," pp. 48, 55, 73, 242). Robert Baillie, *Anabaptism the True Fountaine of Independency* (London, 1647), pp. 31, 96, 97.

⁶⁸ Rufus M. Jones, *Studies in Mystical Religion* (London, 1909), pp. 452-461; Robert Barclay, *The Inner Life of the Religious Societies of the Commonwealth* (London, 1877), pp. 173-178; Robert Baillie, *Anabaptism the True Fountaine of Independency* (London, 1647), pp. 96, 97. Norman Penney (editor), "*The First Publishers of Truth*" (London, 1907), pp. 54, 55, 124, 244.

⁶⁹ iii, 91:22-31; iii, 237:39-238:13; vii, 154:15-21.

it and avoid the evil which it shows to them. Thus he defined the light within in such a way that it was adequate as the authority for a group. His definition also so limited the sphere of the light's revelation that it greatly minimized the chance of the inward revelation's being in opposition to the Bible. On the practical basis of this and on the theoretical basis of the changelessness of the light, he declared that there never is any inconsistency between the revelation of the light within and the historical revelation as recorded in the Bible.⁷⁰ Then he further went on to say that, as the writers of Scripture were inspired by the light, the outstanding characteristic of the Apostolic Church was that it lived in the light in the direct guidance of the Spirit.⁷¹ In this way he made a connection of ideas that equated the obedience to inward authority with the Apostolic pattern which Puritanism was seeking.

There is a further important consideration. Some more or less clearly developed theory of the relation of the light within to the universe as a whole must be made if the light within is to be considered the adequate authority for the church. There are different handlings of this subject in the thought of the Ranters, Everard, Boehme, and Fox. And it will be seen that Fox's assumptions are nearer the middle-of-the-road Christian tradition than are the other three interpretations.

The Ranters were the extreme left wing movement among the sects of the Commonwealth period. Their position may be characterized as one of indis-

⁷⁰ See Chap. vii.

⁷¹ iii, 91:22-31.

creet enthusiastic pantheism.⁷² Their pantheism solves the problem of authority by eliminating authority altogether.⁷³ Excessive stressing of the idea of the immanence of God must always cope with tendencies toward a pantheistical interpretation. There were traces of a belief of the immanence of God in nature in the writings of such men as Boehme, Winstanley, and Everard. But the subtler intellect and stronger moral bias of these men kept their ideas of the immanence of God in nature from degenerating into the crass antinomian pantheism of Ranterism. Ranterism seems to have been a degenerate mystical movement that absorbed the "lunatic fringe" of enthusiasm in the Commonwealth period.⁷⁴

The learned John Everard, whose sermons were published posthumously in 1653, was greatly influenced by the *Mystical Divinity* of Dionysius the Areopagite.⁷⁵ Everard believed that God is light, that he is veiled from our sight by accidents, that if we could truly see we would see that the eternal God flows into all creatures as the river Thames flows into

⁷² Rufus M. Jones, *Studies in Mystical Religion* (London, 1909), p. 472, note 2. Samuel Fisher, *Baby Baptism Mere Babism* (London, 1653), pp. 511, 512. See also passages from Salmon's *Heights in Depths, and Depths in Heights* (London, 1651), and Bauthumley's *The Light and Dark Side of God* (London, 1650), quoted as an Appendix to Chap. xvii in Robert Barclay's *The Inner Life of the Religious Societies of the Commonwealth* (London, 1877); Stereotype Journal (Philadelphia), p. 79.

⁷³ i, 21, 29, 150-152, 166, 184, 185.

⁷⁴ Rufus M. Jones, *Studies in Mystical Religion* (London, 1909), pp. 467, 469, 480; i, p. 185:7-25; *What the Possession of the Living Faith Is* (London, 1659, reprinted 1715), in James Nayler, *A Collection of Sundry Books* (London, 1716), pp. 495, 496; John Everard, *Some Gospel-Treasures Opened* (London, 1653), The Epistle Dedicatory by R. H.

⁷⁵ Everard's translation of the *Mystical Divinity of Dionysius the Areopagite* was included in the posthumous collection of his sermons (1653) entitled *Some Gospel-Treasures Opened*.

all its adjoining creeks, that creatures are darker or more material the farther off they are from God who is pure light or spirit, that God is the substance of all things but that all things that are visible are but shadows. Thus Everard in true *Lichtmetaphysik* fashion tends to define light and darkness primarily in terms of being and non-being rather than in terms of moral right and wrong. Consequently the process of salvation tends to involve for him the individual's training himself to indifference to the whole material and social world and the gradual return of the being of the worshiper as being to be reabsorbed in the being of God.⁷⁶ Practically Everard was not indifferent to moral good and evil and he identified moral good rather than moral evil with light,⁷⁷ and yet he did it against a speculative background in which goodness was eventually minimized in the all-embracing oneness of God, and the emphasis was placed upon the Being rather than upon the moral character of the Deity. On Everard's speculative assumptions the light within a man's heart cannot be the sole authority for the Christian church, because the authority for the Christian church (at least if the church is to stay within the central historical stream of Christian development) must be something that governs choices within a social situation, and Everard in too exclusively mystical fashion was thinking of the light in terms of Being and of salvation in terms of the extraction of the worshiper from

⁷⁶ John Everard, *Some Gospel-Treasures Opened* (London, 1653), pp. 57, 128-131, 230, 341, 342, 353, 375, 381, 387, 411, 412, 425, 630, 636, 637, 641.

⁷⁷ John Everard, *Some Gospel-Treasures Opened* (London, 1653), p. 412.

the social situation and of the return of the being of the worshiper to the being of God.

A third type of background for the inward light is found in the ideas of the Silesian prophet Jacob Boehme.⁷⁸ Boehme died in 1624 and his books were translated into English during the decade of the Commonwealth which was the formative period of Quakerism.⁷⁹ In spite of the chaotic form of his writings and the unusual vocabulary in which they are couched⁸⁰ they had an important leavening influence in seventeenth century English thought.⁸¹

The speculative background for Boehme's thought can be indicated by saying that he combined the idea of the allness and goodness of God with the idea of the existence of positive evil by making evil a kind of recessive characteristic of Deity.⁸² This characteristic becomes active when the oneness of the Deity

⁷⁸ Rufus M. Jones, *Spiritual Reformers in the 16th and 17th Centuries* (London, 1914), p. 151.

⁷⁹ Rufus M. Jones, *Spiritual Reformers in the 16th and 17th Centuries* (London, 1914), pp. 168, 213.

⁸⁰ He often uses the old terminology of alchemy and astrology. See Boehme, *Signatura Rerum*, Chapt. vii, paragraph 71.

⁸¹ Rufus M. Jones, *Spiritual Reformers in the 16th and 17th Centuries* (London, 1914), pp. 208-234.

⁸² These remarks on Boehme's thought are based on Boehme, *The Signature of All Things*, Chap. ii, paragraphs 4, 9-11, 14-17, 34, 35; Chap. iii, paragraphs 2, 4, 7; Chap. iv, paragraphs 1, 18; Chap. v, paragraph 11; Chap. vi, paragraph 21; Chap. vii, paragraphs 16, 40; Chap. viii, paragraphs 2, 6-8, 44; Chap. ix, paragraphs 1, 2, 4, 10, 65; Chap. x, paragraphs 41, 42, 44-47; Chap. xi, paragraph 1; Chap. xiii, paragraph 3; Chap. xiv, paragraphs 1-5, 27-29, 36-39; Chap. xv, paragraphs 43-47; Chap. xvi, paragraphs 16-22, 25, 28, 38; Émile Boutroux, *Historical Studies in Philosophy* (London, 1912), pp. 176, 183, 185-188, 190-192, 200, 206-209, 215-223, 227-229. Rufus M. Jones, *Spiritual Reformers in the 16th and 17th Centuries* (London, 1914), pp. 174-181; D. Erich Seeberg, *Gottfried Arnold* (Meerane i Sa. 1923), pp. 359-362; Rudolf Steiner, *Mystics of the Renaissance* (New York, 1911), pp. 236-241. The self-differentiation of the Deity is eternal. There never was any time before the Deity engaged in activity. See Rufus M. Jones, *Spiritual Reformers in the 16th and 17th Centuries* (London, 1914), p. 175.

becomes modified in a process of self-differentiation when the Deity engages in activity. This self-differentiation, which finally involves the world's coming into existence, is caused by the divine will and desire of the Deity going out over against itself in order that it may have another with which to come into relationship and so engage in activity. The self-interest, which is good while the Deity is undifferentiated, becomes evil self-will when the egressions or outbreathings of Deity (which are endowed with free will and to a large extent with an existence independent of the Deity) are no longer willing to do the divine will but turn to self-centeredness and thus break up the divine harmony. Included in the self-centered will are all the forces which make for confusion or darkness or wrath, and included in the God-centered will are all the forces which make for harmony or light or love. The whole universe is a tremendous struggle between the forces of light and the forces of darkness. In the end there will be an everlasting separation of light from darkness, and the forces of light will continue in a perfect harmony with Deity, a harmony composed not of an undifferentiated oneness but of a multiplicity of wills willing freely the divine harmony. The struggle that is going on between light and darkness is a struggle that extends throughout the physical world as well as throughout the world of spiritual beings, because both physical nature and spiritual beings are thought of as egressions or outbreathings of the will and desire of Deity, although the spiritual beings are thought of as the higher form of egression. From the Christian point of view the great drawbacks to Boehme's speculative system are first, that he really

traces sin back to the nature of Deity as its source in spite of the fact that he minimizes this fact with great skill, and second, that he somewhat blurs the distinction between the evil of the moral transgression of righteousness in social situations and the evil of pain caused by the forces of nature.

Apparently Boehme influenced Fox, for the latter has much to say about the opposition of light and darkness.⁸³ But if so Fox discards Boehme's speculative background for something much nearer the cosmology of orthodox Christianity. According to Fox God is wholly righteous and the presence of evil is accounted for by the not entirely convincing traditional picture of Satan who was created wholly good and fell of his own free will. Satan had no part in creating the world.⁸⁴ The righteous Deity as the pre-existent Christ, the Word, the Light (this identification is made on the basis of the first chapter of *John*)⁸⁵ created the world out of nothing.⁸⁶ The relation of the Deity to the physical world is that of intimate manipulation not of immanence.⁸⁷ In the

⁸³ vii, 23:31; vii, 24:22; vii, 28:2-4; vii, 28:33-35; vii, 29:44; vii, 30:15; vii, 60:6-8; vii, 65:26, 27; vii, 73:1; vii, 80:8; vii, 82:32, 33; vii, 84:15, 16; vii, 86:29; vii, 92:36; vii, 104:44; vii, 107:25, 26, 33-35; vii, 127:24-26; vii, 143:2-4; vii, 146:1; vii, 149:38; vii, 152:17; vii, 153:37, 38; vii, 155:31-33; vii, 174:39-42; vii, 176:1, 2; vii, 176:4-8; vii, 177:11, 12; vii, 179:19, 20; vii, 187:19, 20; vii, 187:35, 36.

⁸⁴ i, 136:5-23; i, 185:7-25; Fox, *To All That Would Know the Way to the Kingdom* (Works, Philadelphia, 1831, vol. iv), p. 25:15; Norman Penney (editor), *The Journal of George Fox* (Cambridge, 1911), vol. ii, p. 26.

⁸⁵ i, 282:3-12.

⁸⁶ iii, 261:32-36; vii, 26:4, 5, 31-33.

⁸⁷ This is especially seen in Fox's emphasis on "movings" and on "the power of the Lord coming upon" a person. See also God's providential care of Fox at sea, Norman Penney (editor), *The Journal of George Fox* (Cambridge, 1911), vol. ii, p. 253. See also vol. i. p. 273.

thought of Fox the physical world is in itself as ethically neutral as it is in the thought of the Hebrew prophets.⁸⁸ There is no light or darkness indwelling in the non-human world. In so far as the light is in the world it shines only within a man's heart.⁸⁹ The light within is sometimes said to be Christ, sometimes to be *from* Christ, sometimes from God, sometimes from Christ to show men the way to God.⁹⁰ When this description of the light is combined with that of its functions as righteous teacher and as that in which is unity, and with the claim that it reveals in Christians *as it revealed in the Apostles*,⁹¹ it will be seen that Fox's light within bears a closer resemblance to the Christian doctrine of the Holy Ghost⁹² than does the light in the thought of the Ranters, Everard, and Boehme. Fox was a thoroughgoing radical of a conservative type.⁹³

Fox offered people an interpretation of Christianity couched in language the least educated could appreciate, individual and universal enough to satisfy the most radical demands for a religion of inward

⁸⁸ i, 136:5-23.

⁸⁹ iii, 46:19-31; vii, 141:33-37.

⁹⁰ vii, 34:14-22; vii, 123:22-25; vii, 158:34-36. See also Chap. iv, note 32.

⁹¹ i, 70:31-71:5; vii, 114:23-29; *Stereotype Journal* (Philadelphia), p. 73:23-48.

⁹² iii, 463:35-43. See also Chap. vii, note 48.

⁹³ In spite of the enthusiasm of Fox we see, even in his early life, traces of the gravity that later became typical of Quakerism. The first of his collected letters, written in 1650, is worth quoting in full:

"Friends: Forsake the company of wild people, and choose the company of sober men, and that will be creditable in the end. And choosing the company of wild and light people, who delight in vain fashions and ill courses, is dangerous, and of a bad report among sober people; for the eyes of such will be upon you: and if they see, ye are wild, ye will come under their censure. Therefore love gravity, and soberness, and wisdom, that doth preserve."

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experience and authority, optimistic enough to cheer those who had been oppressed by the foreordination of Calvinism, but carefully guarded against the dangers of pantheism, antinomianism, and the vagaries of individual interpretation. And Fox's interpretation of religion was planned to meet group needs as well as individual needs. The church was part of his Christianity. I believe that he made a practical synthesis of individual inward spiritual authority and group authority by means of a practical synthesis of the prophetic idea of a morally righteous God who demands moral righteousness of men and the mystical idea of the unity of God and man. He accomplishes this by means of his two working definitions of the light: it is "that which shows a man evil" and it is "that in which is unity."

The study of Fox's idea of the light within is a study of the interrelation of his emphases rather than a systematic theology. Fox was a religious genius, not a logical thinker. And it should be added that the authority that he found for the Quaker group was partly, although unintentionally, the influence of his sterling character and downright honesty and deep understanding of people. Like Samuel Johnson, to whom oddly enough he bears a certain resemblance, the man was greater than his writings.

CHAPTER II

THE NATURE OF MAN

Fox was optimistic in his conception of the nature of man. He discarded the Calvinistic idea of the total depravity of human nature for a view that assumed human free will and the possibility of salvation for all men. And yet with all his optimism, all his emphasis on the divine light in every man, and all his interpretation of salvation in terms of deification, he never fully did away with the Calvinistic dualism. The divine is always other than the human even though God in his dealings with men is brought down out of the clouds and described as *in man*.

It would be putting both a false simplification and a false implication of immanence upon Fox's beliefs to say that his light within is that little spark of the divine in every man which seeks its source and guides men back to God. Fox does not use *spark* for the divine within.¹ As a symbol a spark suggests both light and the source of the light, because, as a spark is something burning, the light that it emits depends wholly upon itself and no longer depends upon the larger flaming mass from which the spark was originally cast off. On the other hand if the word *light* is used as a symbol a greater impression is given

¹ The only exception to this that I have found is i, 310:16-25.

that the thing symbolized constantly comes from a source which is not included in the range of the symbol. Considering the large number of symbols that Fox uses to describe the divine within, his omission of *spark* is important.

If Fox's thought had not contained a large element of the transcendent divine² influencing men it is doubtful whether Quakerism would have swung over to Quietism in mysticism and Calvinism in theology as it actually did in the last part of the 17th and early part of the 18th centuries.³ Fox himself is not Calvinistic. The following discussion of his conception of the nature of man and regeneration shows the poise of his spirit in holding a balance between the conceptions of the divine within and the divine transcendent.

The Calvinism from which Fox reacted assumes that natural man is completely depraved.⁴ The divine which is good is wholly other than man.⁵ Natural man cannot even be thought of as able to make any motion to turn to God, for such a motion would itself be good and if a person is thought of as being completely depraved he cannot be thought of as in any degree initiating any good.⁶ Hence all acts tending to bring about man's salvation are acts of God not man.⁷ Man, in so far as the possibility for his own salvation is concerned, is a mere puppet.⁸ There-

² iii, 353:24-28.

³ Wm. C. Braithwaite, *The Second Period of Quakerism* (London, 1919). Introduction by Rufus M. Jones, pp. xli, xlii.

⁴ *Westminster Confession*, Chap. vi, section iv.

⁵ *Ibid.*, Chap. ii, section ii.

⁶ *Westminster Confession*, Chap. ix, section iii.

⁷ *Ibid.*, Chap. x, section iii; chap. xvi, section iii.

⁸ *Ibid.*, Chap. x, section i.

fore the separation of the sheep from the goats becomes wholly a matter of arbitrary selection on the part of a sovereign God.⁹ This makes a man's experience of being saved simply a conscious arrival at a state which, theoretically, always had existed as a potentiality which in the course of time would inevitably be actualized.¹⁰ Furthermore, this extreme emphasis on the depravity of man tends to discount the adequacy of the normal human medium for receiving direct divine revelation, and fosters too exclusive a reliance on a supposedly miraculously given divine guide-book.¹¹ This in turn fosters an overvaluation of a merely technical knowledge of the divine guide-book,¹² so that mere technical expertness may come to pass for religious expertness.

This Calvinistic type of thought called forth a protest from Fox both because he was a prophet of righteousness and because he was a mystic. As a prophet he could not believe that God's arbitrariness is such that moral distinctions so cease to apply to him that he can be (from the human point of view) unjust and unloving to some men.¹³ Likewise Fox could not accept any description of man's nature that takes away his responsibility for sin by making him incapable of doing good,¹⁴ nor accept any view of God's relation to man in which God's demand that people shall be righteous can be satisfied by righteousness imputed to them.¹⁵ As a mystic (with the

⁹ *Ibid.*, Chap. iii.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, Chap. xi, section iv.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, Chap. i, sections i, vii, viii, ix, x.

¹² *Ibid.*, Chap. iii, section viii.

¹³ iii, 61:37-62:4; iii, 528:33-529:6; iii, 531:20-31.

¹⁴ iii, 540:35-43.

¹⁵ iii, 271:25-34; iii, 530:13-22; iii, 552:42-553:12.

mystical temperament which sees man as the variable and God as the unchanging)¹⁶ he could not accept a doctrine according to which the depravity of human nature is so complete that depraved human nature seems the invariable factor and an arbitrary God the variable factor.¹⁷ And finally, to him as a mystic, the Calvinistic emphasis upon the letter of scripture seemed an unjustifiable externalization of religion.¹⁸

An emphasis upon man's free will and the divine within man is very characteristic of Fox. But the terms in which he expresses these beliefs relate him more closely to the Calvinistic conception of a transcendent God who influences human life at will¹⁹ than to either the rationalism which sees in the human light of reason something divine, or to the more modern viewpoint which tends to see an immanence of the divine in the creation and an emergence of the divine in man.

The outline of Fox's ideas, if it is consistent enough to be called an outline, is a working description of practical religion rather than a systematic theology. Fox's mind was untrained, and he thought in pictures rather than in abstractions, and his symbolism is not carefully defined. For example, he uses a large number of rather simple symbols synonymously—as "light within," "measure within," "pearl within," "word of God within," "seed," "the power of God," "the Holy Ghost," "the spirit of truth," "the cross within," all of which terms mean "Christ

¹⁶ iii, 413:28-36.

¹⁷ iii, 171:30-38; iii, 323:37-42; iii, 413:25-36; vii, 86:28-39.

¹⁸ iii, 397:9-17; iii, 404:1-19; vii, 34:1-7.

¹⁹ i, 2:19-22; iii, 396:17-24; iii, 552:42-553:12.

within''²⁰—and then he so employs them that they cease to be entirely synonymous, or come to describe slightly different aspects or activities of the same deity. And even in his differentiation, it is often the general emphasis in his use of a term rather than any definite definition that must be the guide to interpreting Fox.

Fox's repudiation of Puritanism is not a repudiation of merely superficial details, but a denial of the fundamental Calvinistic assumption of the bondage of the human will and the complete depravity of human nature. Fox himself declares that he does not believe in free will, but as he defines free will it means a man's acting in accord with his own personal self-centered desires, and the unfree will, which he considers the desirable religious state, consists in the self-subjection of the human will to the divine.²¹ He redefines the word in such a way that his use of it avoids the Calvinistic problem. Using the word with the Calvinistic, not the Foxian, definition, it can be said that Fox does believe in free will.²² According to Fox the subjection of the human will to the divine will is not constrained. The human will is constantly free to make the choice of whether or not it will be subject to the divine will. But practically speaking, Fox's Pelagian tendency to overconfidence in and overemphasis upon the power of human nature is counteracted by three elements in his thought which bring Fox spiritually nearer to Puritanism than his theoretical belief in the freedom of the human will suggests.

²⁰ iii, 88:23-25; iii, 290:2-4; iii, 413:28-32; vii, 27:4-8; vii, 69:20, 21.

²¹ iii, 69:10-23; iii, 454:32-40; vii, 102:3, 4; vii, 152:14-20.

²² iii, 212:3-19.

The first is that his vivid prophetic insistence upon the righteousness and the righteous demands of God²³ combines with his vivid mystical insight that unity with God means the complete unity and harmony of Christians with each other²⁴ because God is one and not inconsistent with himself.²⁵ This leads Fox to a view of society in general that is the reverse of comforting.²⁶ The church after the days of the apostles fell away from its early state of living in the direct power of God. So men came to live in the merely human reason and to depend upon the mere transmitted knowledge about God and Christ. So being out of the power they were out of the unity, and so the church became corrupt and the mystery of iniquity or anti-Christ came to reign in Christendom.²⁷ It is not a case of the world being a checkered place of good and evil. The inter-relation of the self-wills of men forms an evil reality whose existence seems to be something more than the sum of the specific evils that constitute it. It is the mystery of iniquity, and it has made the whole world a dark world of sin and death.²⁸ Man needs to be brought with divine aid out of the dark world of sin and death into the world of light and life.²⁹ Fox preaches that the terrible day of the Lord is at hand³⁰ when the fire

²³ iii, 553:1-12.

²⁴ i, 40:1-3; i, 71:1-5; iii, 217:11, 12, 17-25; vii, 87:17-19; vii, 142:1-7; vii, 150:25-28.

²⁵ i, 97:37-39; vii, 30:18-24.

²⁶ vii, 164:41-165:3.

²⁷ iii, 91:22-31; iii, 237:39-238:13; vii, 127:12-14; vii, 154:15.

²⁸ iii, 99:6-9; iii, 231:37-40; iii, 239:1-5; vii, 28:1-5; vii, 70:7-14; vii, 88:13-19; vii, 127:12-14; *Stereotype Journal* (Philadelphia), p. 70:26-28.

²⁹ i, 81:38-82:19; vii, 176:1-8.

³⁰ i, 30:38; i, 40:4, 5; i, 306:1-3; i, 311:16, 17. Sometimes he says it has already come. i, 8:13-15; i, 39:24, 25.

of the Lord is going out to judge the wickedness (and the wicked and to consume it (and them)).³¹ Thus, although Fox denied Calvinism's claim of the complete bondage of the human will, he nevertheless, like Calvinism, pictured a dark situation from which man needs to be rescued.³²

In the second place, although Fox does not think that God forces the human will, he nevertheless describes God as crashing violently into a man's life both at conversion and afterward.³³ He describes quaking as the "power of the Lord" which comes to "hammer down" the evil in a man's nature, and Fox declares that a man must know quaking before he can know salvation.³⁴ Furthermore, all through Fox's ministry he was subject to the movings of the Lord, that is to the direct influence or command of God to do certain things.³⁵ So although man for Fox never becomes a puppet in the hands of the Almighty, and although man always has the deciding vote of whether he will or will not submit to God, God is pictured as bringing definite pressure to bear upon men to influence them.³⁶ Thus in spite of Fox's insistence on man's freedom he retains the Calvinistic idea of the manipulation of man by God.³⁷

³¹ i, 284:3, 4; i, 306:1-5; vii, 48:1-7. Fox does not seem to have thought of this fire in physical terms. However, he considered the Fire of London a judgment of God and claimed to have had inspired foresight of it. Norman Penney, editor, *The Journal of George Fox* (Cambridge, 1911), vol. ii, pp. 89, 90, 110. For Fox's use of "fire" see also i, 174:23-32; vii, 63:23, 24; vii, 68:1; vii, 69:12-14.

³² *Westminster Confession*, Chap. vi; vii, 28:1-5; vii, 93:24-28; vii, 164:41-165:3; vii, 176:1-8.

³³ i, 115:10-21; i, 140:1-7; i, 140:8-14; iii, 162:14-37.

³⁴ iii, 162:14-37; iii, 213:22-34.

³⁵ i, 15, 16; i, 57:22, 23; i, 59:8, 9; i, 182:32, 33; i, 198:34-38; i, 342:19-29.

³⁶ i, 5:7, 8; i, 15:1-6; i, 258:34-259:4; i, 274:7-20; i, 276:31, 32.

³⁷ i, 25:16.

In the third place, regeneration for Fox is a change of state.³⁸ A sum of good deeds does not make a good man;³⁹ but he only is a good man whose whole will has turned toward the light in obedience, which act brings man into a state in which he can be supernaturally born again.⁴⁰ The regenerate man is born of God and does "not commit sin, neither can he."⁴¹ The saints have entered into perfection and will inevitably persevere.⁴² Here, too, in spite of his belief in the freedom of the will, there is in Fox the Calvinistic assurance that the regenerate are perfectly safe.⁴³ It should be added that Fox does not hold consistently these ideas of sinlessness and perseverance. He warns well-established Friends against wrong-doing, and he mentions Friends who have fallen away.⁴⁴ All of this, together with the question of whether the regenerate is the whole man or part of the man will be discussed at length under the subject of regeneration. Fox is simply not consistent on these points. Suffice it to say here that, in spite of believing in free will, Fox places in God his confidence for man's being brought to a condition of permanent safety.⁴⁵

We have said that Fox believed that man has free will and we have pointed out at length the Calvinistic overtones to that conception as held by Fox. If

³⁸ iii, 129:5-10; vii, 28:14-16, 22-25; vii, 66:12, 13; vii, 168:1-6; *Stereotype Journal* (Philadelphia), pp. 67:9-11.

³⁹ iii, 102:7-12; iii, 268:31-269:4.

⁴⁰ i, 146:23-31; iii, 449:23-30; vii, 146:37-147:2, 37, 38.

⁴¹ iii, 69:32-39; iii, 109:3-11.

⁴² iii, 79:7-18; iii, 265:16-28; iii, 445:8-17.

⁴³ *Westminster Confession*, Chap. xvii; vii, 57:16-40.

⁴⁴ i, 14:20, 21; vii, 28:1-6; Norman Penney, editor, *The Journal of George Fox* (Cambridge, 1911), vol. ii, p. 314:16-22.

⁴⁵ i, 146:1-147:11; vii, 57:16-40.

human nature as such is free and has ability to recognize and turn to the divine it follows that human nature at the fall did not become completely depraved.

Fox believed that Adam was created sinless and fell of his own free will and thus brought evil and death into the world. But men do not inherit the guilt of Adam's sin; neither do they inherit a nature that is wholly evil.⁴⁶ They inherit a nature which until it is regenerated will inevitably do evil deeds, but not a nature that has lost its capacity to turn to the divine if the divine is made available to it. Fox's whole central doctrine is that "the light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world" is the divine made sufficiently available to man.⁴⁷

This mere human nature is the total unregenerate man with all his powers of memory, sense, impression, emotion, and logical reasoning.⁴⁸ The human nature seems to be created by God in the same manner as the physical world.⁴⁹ That is, the human nature is not an emanation of the divine.⁵⁰ The divine light, although all men have it within them, is by no means part of the human nature. The light could be theoretically removed from men and they would go about their business as usual and no difference would be observable between an unregenerate man who had not the light within him and an unregenerate man who had the light within him.⁵² According to Fox the state of merely having the light within one

⁴⁶ iii, 553:13-43.

⁴⁷ iii, 197:25-33; iii, 306:28-307:10.

⁴⁸ iii, 139:42-140:2; iii, 306:28-44; iii, 396:35-43; vii, 141:33-37.

⁴⁹ vii, 141:33-37.

⁵⁰ vii, 37:43-38:2.

⁵¹ vii, 37:43-38:2; vii, 158:37, 38.

⁵² iii, 46:19-31; vii, 141:33-37.

is very different from the state of living in the light.⁵³ The second state is necessary for salvation.⁵⁴ The two states are sharply differentiated and a person passes from one to the other not by a gradual development but by a specific redirection of the whole will.⁵⁵ It should be observed that there is here no theory of *Lichtmetaphysik* by which the degree of being is thought of as equivalent to the degree of participation in light.⁵⁶ Fox makes no relationship between physical light and the light within;⁵⁷ there is none of the divine light in the non-human world;⁵⁸ and, as has been pointed out, the divine light, although it shines in every man, is distinctly not part of the human nature.

The relation of evil to this human nature is not clearly stated. Fox sometimes says that God created man in his own image but that when Adam sinned the image of God became lost and the image of the devil was set up in man.⁵⁹ If this is taken for more than a general picturesque statement of the idea that evil came to be a ruling force it would seem to be an indication that Fox believed in the complete depravity of human nature. But the whole drift of Fox's teaching points away from such an interpretation. A variant explanation of the relation of the human nature to evil is that man as created had the seed of God in him, implying that this seed of God was from the first in the human nature but not of it. Then when man sinned the seed of the devil came to

⁵³ iii, 46:19-31.

⁵⁴ i, 26:12-27:10.

⁵⁵ i, 27:6-9; iii, 306:28-43.

⁵⁶ C. Baeumker, *Witelo* (1908), pp. 385:7-386:4.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 374:15-376:4.

⁵⁸ vii, 141:33-39; C. Baeumker, *Witelo* (1908), pp. 398:18-399:2.

⁵⁹ iii, 553:30-35.

be sown in man, and it oppressed the seed of God.⁶⁰ This picture does full justice to man's free will because, while it gives the evil a certain advantage over the good, it at the same time leaves the human nature morally neutral and free to join itself to either the seed of God or the seed of the devil.⁶¹ This theory of the two seeds appears from time to time in Fox's thought but it is not the explanation he uses most. His usual explanation is that when man sinned the human nature became so evil that it oppressed the pure seed of God in man and the pure seed thus came to be "pressed down as a cart with sheaves" and to be so imprisoned by man's evil nature as to lie dormant.⁶² The evil human nature is then thought of as being so evil that it can do nothing by itself to effect its own salvation, but not so corrupted that it cannot choose to make use of divine help if divine help is given it.⁶³

By the *seed*⁶⁴ Fox seems to mean the divine as essence and as potentiality within man.⁶⁵ This divine is in man but not of man. We are describing the man now before regeneration, and at this time the seed is little more than a stage property. It is part of God's arrangements which make it possible for regeneration to take place, but before regeneration the seed exerts no influence upon the human nature.⁶⁶

⁶⁰ i, 142:22-31; iii, 553:20-33; vii, 137:11-23; vii, 154:14-16.

⁶¹ i, 147:38-148:2; i, 202:4-16; i, 266:21-29; iii, 44:9-17; iii, 50:27-31; iii, 155:22-28; vii, 38:42-44; vii, 56:36-57:2; vii, 71:24-36; vii, 186:12-19.

⁶² iii, 46:32-38; vii, 127:26, 27.

⁶³ iii, 162:19-31; iii, 192:38-193:5; iii, 212:3-17.

⁶⁴ By *seed* the divine seed is meant unless otherwise stated.

⁶⁵ vii, 102:31-34; vii, 103:7-10.

⁶⁶ iii, 508:24-37. (It is to be noted that while the seed is Christ and the light is from Christ the light is never from the seed. That is, seed does not have connotations of a transcendent Christ.)

In addition to the human nature and the seed each man has a soul. The relation of the soul to the seed, the light, and the human nature, is very indefinitely expressed and apparently is very indefinite in Fox's own mind, and yet a discussion of it is necessary to show Fox's view. What he says about the soul sheds much light upon the problem created by Calvinist emphasis upon religious dualism, which problem Fox inherited. This dualism placed God and man so far apart⁶⁷ that man could only be saved by having salvation forced upon him by a special divine intervention from without.⁶⁸ As God was arbitrary in his choice of those upon whom he forced the saving grace, a man's state (from the subjective viewpoint) was highly precarious until he knew that he was one of God's arbitrarily chosen favorites.⁶⁹ Had Fox been a thoroughgoing mystic he doubtless would have solved the problem of the dualism by an extreme emphasis upon the unity and comprehensiveness of being of God, and by a corresponding definition of evil as lack of being. It would then have been possible to describe salvation in terms of a gradual return of the divine in every man to the source of being, and the gradual sloughing off of the evil or non-being. But for Fox evil never ceases to have reality,⁷⁰ and the

⁶⁷ *Westminster Confession*, Chap. vii, section i.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, Chap. xi, section iv.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, Chap. iii, sections iii, iv, v.

⁷⁰ iii, 426:23-28; iii, 454:32-40; iii, 458:25-459:2; iii, 460:25-33; iii, 520:7-14; vii, 48:11-14. But good is more permanent than evil. i, 335:29-39; vii, 137:11-23; vii, 152:7-10. Fox does not harmonize these two important religious insights. The thought of the greater permanence of the good is emphasized for the encouragement of Christians. Its logical implications are not stressed and allowed to interfere with Fox's view that evil is something more than non-being and that evil never ceases to have reality.

divine never ceases to be other than the human,⁷¹ and consequently there is never the picture of the world with all human beings at different stages of progress in their way to God, but instead there is a distinction sharply drawn between those living in light and those living in darkness.⁷² There is a definite before and after to the spiritual rebirth.⁷³ Fox holds this idea in spite of the fact that he himself was a once-born religious genius.⁷⁴

It should be noted that *soul* is not, strictly speaking, a Foxian term. Where he is speaking according to his own terminology as in the *Letters* and *Journal* he uses the word very little. There are several passing references to Christ the saviour of the soul,⁷⁵ to the immortal soul being brought up to the immortal God,⁷⁶ and several passing references to the immortal soul being anchored to its bishop, (*i.e.*, Christ) and that is all.⁷⁷ Usually Fox simply assumes that although man is an evil doer by nature there is always ability in his nature that can recognize and respond to the light of God which brings salvation to all who turn to it, by making them born again

⁷¹ i, 317:24-37.

⁷² vii, 176:1-8.

⁷³ i, 152:7-13; i, 166:30-39; iii, 119:1-10. In this regard Fox's emphasis upon *convincement* is important, and so is his emphasis upon regeneration involving a redirection of the will. i, 146:23-30; iii, 449:23-30; vii, 146:37-147:2, 37, 38. The early Quaker journals reveal the sharp contrast of the period of uneasiness preceding conversion with the period of constant peace after conversion. The uneasiness was in some cases probably partly due to the seriousness of the social step involved in becoming a Quaker. Luella M. Wright, *The Literary Life of the Early Friends* (New York, 1932), pp. 177, 199.

⁷⁴ Stereotype *Journal*, p. 55.

⁷⁵ vii, 33:30-37.

⁷⁶ vii, 150:37-40.

⁷⁷ Stereotype *Journal* (Philadelphia), p. 62:30-34; vii, 157:1-14.

children of God and of the light.⁷⁸ However, in the controversial work, *The Great Mystery*, Fox's opponents force him to define the soul more carefully. *Soul* is such a common part of the Christian vocabulary that Fox is forced to make the attempt. He cannot dodge, as he does on questions involving *essence* and *person*, by saying the term is unscriptural and so does not need consideration.⁷⁹

In *The Great Mystery* Fox denies that human souls are created. This is in support of the assumption which is in line with his mysticism, that the created is the phenomenal which is transient, and the divine is the uncreated which is permanent.⁸⁰ Fox says that the soul has no beginning, coming from God, and returning into God again.⁸¹ He even refuses entirely to apply the adjective *human* to it because he says that what is human is "from the earth" and "from the ground."⁸² This description of the soul as returning "into God"⁸³ is very unusual in Fox's writings. Usually, according to his teachings, the goal is the unity or oneness in fellowship of individuals with the divine,⁸⁴ not the reabsorption of the individual into the divine. Fox bases his belief that the soul is a part of God upon the second chapter of Genesis, where after God had created man he breathed into him the breath of life and so man became a

⁷⁸ See Chap. iii.

⁷⁹ i, 68:37-41; iii, 397:1-7; iii, 400:25-33.

⁸⁰ iii, 180:34-181:15; iii, 413:9-36. In commenting on pages 180 and 181 William Penn tries to minimize the implication that the soul is an emanation from God. William Penn, *A Collection of the Works of William Penn* (London, 1726), vol. ii, pp. 521, 522.

⁸¹ iii, 167:14-21; iii, 180:13-16; iii, 528:3-14.

⁸² iii, 481:33-39.

⁸³ iii, 180:13-16; iii, 180:34-181:15.

⁸⁴ iii, 35:3-12; iii, 291:28-292:8.

living soul.⁸⁵ The breath of life which was the cause of man's becoming a living soul came out from God and so is part of God.⁸⁶ This is the nearest that Fox comes to an emanation theory,⁸⁷ and it is significant that here, just when his argument makes the reader think that he does have such a theory he uses some of the most anthropomorphic expressions for God that are to be found in his writings; this group of phrases convey so clearly the idea that God and the soul are separate individuals that the impression of emanation is greatly lessened. Fox says that Christ is the bishop of the soul,⁸⁸ that hope anchors the soul to God,⁸⁹ that the soul is in the hand of God,⁹⁰ that the hand of God goes against him who does evil and brings the soul up to God,⁹¹ and that the living God takes pleasure in the living soul.⁹²

Fox also makes the claim that the soul is sinless. He points out that God accepts the soul as an offering for sin and he declares that God could never accept that which is sinful as such an offering.⁹³ Fox denies the belief that the soul is an immortal sinful substance.⁹⁴ For him that would be a contradiction in terms because for him God is what is immortal or permanent.⁹⁵ Sin not being part of God although

⁸⁵ iii, 134:31-35; iii, 528:3-14.

⁸⁶ iii, 134:31-35; iii, 180:34-181:15.

⁸⁷ iii, 134:31-36; iii, 371:30-372:2.

⁸⁸ iii, 167:14-21; iii, 240:2-12; iii, 288:43-289:12.

⁸⁹ vii, 157:12-14.

⁹⁰ iii, 134:31-35; iii, 240:2-12; iii, 288:43-289:12; iii, 371:30-372:2; iii, 528:3-14.

⁹¹ iii, 77:37; iii, 371:30-372:2; iii, 528:3-14.

⁹² iii, 371:30-372:2.

⁹³ iii, 528:3-14.

⁹⁴ iii, 371:30-372:2; iii, 528:3-14.

⁹⁵ See Chap. v.

having actual existence must be relatively transient.⁹⁶

Fox is now forced to explain how the soul which is immortal and sinless can be in man who is a sinner. He does this by making the soul completely quiescent until regeneration.⁹⁷ It is little more than the potentiality of life, purity, and immortality in man. Fox does not say that the soul is dead but he does say that the soul until regeneration is in prison and death.⁹⁸ Regeneration then involves a freeing of the living, sinless, and immortal soul from the sinful nature in which it is imprisoned.⁹⁹ Thus Fox's conception of regeneration is described quite literally in one of its aspects as a bringing of life and immortality to light.¹⁰⁰

The question arises of whether the soul is the same as the seed, for each seems to be a divine essence embedded and imprisoned in the wicked human nature.¹⁰¹ I think they are not the same.¹⁰² In the first place Fox never identifies the soul with the seed. In the second place the seed is said to be Christ¹⁰³ and so it is connected with the historical Jesus; while the soul is never said to be Christ, but Christ is said to be the bishop of the soul, and the soul¹⁰⁴ is said to be anchored to Christ. In the third place, regeneration involves a joining of the human to the seed,¹⁰⁵

⁹⁶ iii, 371:30-372:2.

⁹⁷ iii, 167:26-33; iii, 168:1-6.

⁹⁸ i, 74:40, 41; iii, 140:15-17; iii, 240:2-12.

⁹⁹ iii, 140:15-17; iii, 228:1-7.

¹⁰⁰ i, 24:24, 25; iii, 292:1-8.

¹⁰¹ iii, 140:15-17.

¹⁰² iii, 162:27-30.

¹⁰³ i, 153:5.

¹⁰⁴ iii, 240:2-12.

¹⁰⁵ vii, 104:7-15.

which being Christ is divine with connotations of transcendence, while regeneration never involves a joining of the human to the soul, because the soul, although always divine, has always human connotations, even before regeneration.¹⁰⁶ Thus the soul and the seed which are within man are seen to be picturesque stepping stones to enable Fox to get theoretically from the human to the divine within man. The very fact that Fox needed the stepping stones shows how the dualism which he inherited remained, although in a much modified form, in his thought.¹⁰⁷

Since the seed and the soul are completely quiescent before regeneration and have only a relation of proximity and not a functional relation to the human nature, Fox is able to look at human nature before regeneration and paint a black picture of it and of unregenerate society.¹⁰⁸ The darkness of the picture is superficially not inharmonious with the Calvinistic description of the state of the world. Since the soul and seed are quiescent, Fox can preach genuinely and effectively the precarious condition of unregenerate man.¹⁰⁹ On the other hand since the soul and seed are really the divine within all men Fox's view has a fundamental optimism that is uncalvinistic. It should be repeated that the *soul* conception is not as typically Foxian as is the *seed* conception.

In addition to the seed each man has the light within him. This is Fox's most characteristic doc-

¹⁰⁶ iii, 288:43-289:12; vii, 39:41; vii, 77:9; vii, 105:29; vii, 150:38. Compare vii, 65:38.

¹⁰⁷ I have found one passage where the distinction between *soul* and *seed* is blurred. This exception to the general rule is vii, 24:23-30.

¹⁰⁸ vii, 118:22-26; vii, 28:2-5.

¹⁰⁹ iii, 118:22-26; vii, 59.

trine.¹¹⁰ Since the light as well as the seed is Christ, there is some question as to whether the light and the seed are the same. In the sense in which they are both Christ they are of course both the same. There is a fluidness to all Fox's definitions. But although both the light and the seed are Christ within there is an important difference in emphasis in the use of the two words. The seed seems to be the divine as essence planted out away from the transcendent God in man.¹¹¹ The constant light seems to be the continuous activity of the transcendent deity within man.¹¹² The divine as seed is not active in man until regeneration.¹¹³ The divine as light is always active in man even before regeneration.¹¹⁴ The divine as seed is always described as Christ.¹¹⁵ The divine as light is sometimes said to be Christ, but it is more often said to be *from* Christ, and it is occasionally said to be from God. The seed is never identified

¹¹⁰ vii, 58:36-59:10. "And Christ saith, he is the light of the world, and hath enlightened everyone that cometh into the world; and he that loves the light, brings his deeds to the light, to him there is no occasion of stumbling; and this teaching guides to God, the Father of light. And the other, he hates the light, because the light will reprove him; here he knows his deeds are evil, by the light. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men love darkness rather than light . . . for Christ hath enlightened thee, and given thee a sight of thy sins, which shall be thy condemnation, hating it. For thou that hatest it, hast it. And it is thou, that putteth the letter for the light, which was given from the light, from them that walked in the light; but thou hating the light given thee, thou knowest not the conditions of them that had the light, but putteth darkness for light, and light for darkness; and so we rests upon thee!" With the exception of the scriptural quotation "the Father of light" this whole passage, including scriptural quotations, is highly characteristic of Fox.

¹¹¹ Fox himself is very vague as to the meaning of "essence," see iii, 400:25-33; vii, 141:33-43.

¹¹² i, 282:11, 12; i, 284:5-8; iii, 35:13-22.

¹¹³ iii, 248:30-38.

¹¹⁴ vii, 59:4-6.

¹¹⁵ i, 153:5.

with the Holy Ghost. The light can sometimes be so identified.¹¹⁶

As the seed is in man but not of man¹¹⁷ so the light is in him but not of him.¹¹⁸ The light is thoroughly supernatural.¹¹⁹ It is not conscience, or the light of nature, or the light of reason.¹²⁰ Its primary definition is "that which shows a man evil." The evil belongs to the natural man. That which shows a man evil is contrary to the evil and above nature.¹²¹ The light which shows a man evil comes from Christ to show men the way to God.¹²²

This is Fox's picture of unregenerate man. The evil human nature which nevertheless has free will and under proper conditions can turn to God is the human element in this picture. Connected with this evil human nature, chiefly by a kind of intimate proximity,¹²³ are the divine soul, seed, and light, the first two completely quiescent and the third active but almost unheeded. The stage is completely set for regeneration.

¹¹⁶ iii, 47:17-26; iii, 107:1-7; vii, 71:13-15; vii, 122:34-123:8.

¹¹⁷ vii, 104:12-15; vii, 106:5-12.

¹¹⁸ iii, 233:16-25; vii, 29:27; vii, 158:37, 38.

¹¹⁹ vii, 37:43-38:1, " . . . and a clear separation will be made from that which is of man, and of your own, and that which is of God . . . " iii, 570:8-16, " . . . and it is true your hearts are dark, and minds are dark, even as a dark lantern, we do believe it; and the light in you shines in darkness, and is held in the dark lantern, and no light in you appears unto the dark world, but your unholy lives and your unsanctified spirits, and you know not what God is a doing, who are unbelievers. But the saints have the mind of Christ, and know what God is doing; for his spirit dwells in them, but you have shut out yourselves that you are ignorant of God and what he is doing; but Christ's ministers, their light shines among men. . . . "

¹²⁰ iii, 49:25-33; iii, 52:42-53:7; iii, 64:30-37; iii, 92:12-18.

¹²¹ iii, 48:27-35; vii, 52:12-17; vii, 71:36-41; vii, 104:12-18; vii, 106:5-12.

¹²² i, 284:5-8.

¹²³ iii, 291:28-292:28.

CHAPTER III

REGENERATION

Mere human nature cannot regenerate or save itself.¹ Man must be saved by the supernatural grace of God.² On these points Fox was in agreement with Calvinism. The disagreement came over the question of the availability of saving grace to all men,³ and over the question of whether it is in the power of the natural man to receive or reject the grace.⁴ Calvinism declared that the human nature is completely impotent, and that therefore the whole process of salvation is accomplished by the grace of God. To all men God gives a common universal grace which however is not sufficient to save.⁵ To the elect, who were irrevocably elected before the foundation of the world, God gives a special grace which is sufficient to save and so is saving grace.⁶ It is efficacious grace. It effects or accomplishes man's salvation.⁷

Fox, on the contrary, declared that the light is universal grace because it lighteth "every man that cometh into the world."⁸ (John I:9.) And, also

¹ vii, 106:5-12.

² iii, 192:38-193:5.

³ *Westminster Confession*, Chap. iii, section vi, Chap. v, section vi; iii, 264:33-265:5.

⁴ *Ibid.*, Chap. x, sections ii, iv.

⁵ *Ibid.*, Chap. i, section i, Chap. v, section vii, Chap. x, section iv; iii, 528:33-529:6.

⁶ *Ibid.*, Chap. x, sections i-iii.

⁷ *Ibid.*, Chap. vii, sections iv, v.

⁸ vii, 122:34-123:8. *John* 1:9 is quoted two hundred and seventy-one times in *The Great Mystery*.

on the basis of the first chapter of John, he identifies the light with Christ.⁹ Since the light is Christ it is sufficient to save.¹⁰ Thus instead of making a distinction between universal and saving grace as Calvinism does, Fox declares that the universal grace is the saving grace.¹¹ However Fox does not say that universal grace is efficacious grace because it does not by itself effect a man's salvation, but it is saving only if a man accepts it and turns to it.¹² Puritans declared that they also admitted that the universal common grace will save *if men turn to it and accept it*,¹³ but they said that the difficulty is that men can not receive it, and that special grace, which has power given with it to make men receive it, is necessary.¹⁴ Fox declared that in the light, which is universal and saving grace, power is always given to believe.¹⁵ The difference here between Calvinism and Fox is that with Calvinism the power of saving grace is sufficient to force each man to accept the grace, while with Fox the power given with the saving grace or light is sufficient to supplement what little ability of recognizing and accepting grace an unregenerate man has, so that the unregenerate man is thought of as free to accept or reject the grace.

Fox's emphasis is not on the ability of man to better his condition, but on the goodness of God in so arranging the conditions that man is able to turn and take advantage of the offered salvation. Neverthe-

⁹ i, 275:22-27; i, 276:6-21; vii, 58:36-40.

¹⁰ iii, 91:1-5.

¹¹ i, 294:40-295:6; iii, 313:30-34.

¹² iii, 61:37-62:4; iii, 230:20-30.

¹³ *Westminster Confession*, Chap. vii, section iii.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, Chap. ix, section iii.

¹⁵ iii, 95:27-34.

less it is true in Fox's thought that, since God makes it possible for all men to be saved, the human will is really the pivotal factor (in the sense of being the variable factor) in each individual instance.¹⁶ The act which is the watershed between the unregenerate and the regenerate life is a man's turning to live in the divine light which is Christ which shines in the heart of every man that cometh into the world.¹⁷

It is extremely interesting to watch how Fox's description of conversion differs from and yet reinterprets and takes into consideration various aspects of the Calvinistically fostered conversion experience. According to Calvinistic Puritanism a man pays attention to the Word of God which is the Bible and the grace of God comes and convicts him of sin. The man then sees his sinful state and recognizes his lost condition and fears the just wrath of God. The man sees that he is completely helpless to remedy the situation and throws himself wholly upon the mercy of God who has revealed in the scripture that He, because of the merits of Christ, will forgive all those who turn and put their entire confidence in him and repent of their sins. The man then discovers not only that God has freely forgiven and accepted him but also that he is so helpless that his whole interest in scripture, conviction of sin, fear of God, and turning to God have really been entirely the work of God to save him.¹⁸

According to Fox a man pays attention to the Word of God which is Christ, the light within, the

¹⁶ iii, 49:34-50:2; iii, 91:12-21; iii, 530:42-531:10.

¹⁷ i, 44:17-22; iii, 122:17-23.

¹⁸ See the *Westminster Confession*; Richard Baxter, *Call to the Unconverted, To Turn and Live*; and John Bunyan, *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*.

grace of God. The grace of God, the light within, then convinces the man of sin.¹⁹ The man, recognizing that without purity none shall see God, and recognizing that the light within which has convinced him of sin is pure and divine, has faith in it and turns to it in obedience;²⁰ and so he comes to *feel* the light, and in it to enjoy peace, quietness, purity, a state of permanence, and a unity and fellowship with God²¹ that is so intimate that he can realize that his body is the temple of God and Christ and of the Holy Ghost for them to dwell in him and walk in him.²² And the man comes to be so guided by the light, which is Christ, the Word and power of God, that he can say, "I live, yet not I, but Christ in me."²³

It is the function of the light in convincing a man of sin that Fox uses as his primary definition and practical working definition of the light.²⁴ The other definitions—that it is that which shines in the heart to show man "the glory of God in the face of Christ Jesus,"²⁵ and that it is that in which is unity,—are important but secondary. It is hard to overemphasize this primary definition's importance both for Fox's thought, and for the practical ability of his

¹⁹ i, 12:30-13:2; i, 50:10-23; iii, 64:1-9; iii, 90:34-43; iii, 127:11-15.

²⁰ i, 100:1-39; vii, 149:40, 41.

²¹ iii, 116:35-117:2; iii, 286:40-287:2; iii, 309:7-17; vii, 63:1-6; vii, 66:9-20; vii, 70:14-17; vii, 81:18-21; vii, 119:8-16, 29-34.

²² i, 56:39-41; i, 68:40, 41; i, 139:33, 34; iii, 57:3-7; iii, 233:7-12; vii, 27:7, 8.

²³ iii, 40:19-25.

²⁴ The following instances of the use of the definition are all taken from the letters Fox wrote before 1654. This shows that he early arrived at that conception which was the strongest factor in making possible a high degree of stability in the midst of his extreme individualism. vii, 18:11, 12; vii, 24:19-23; vii, 34:14-19; vii, 40:43-41:1; vii, 43:17-26; vii, 49:30-34; vii, 51:5-8; vii, 53:28-30; vii, 54:15, 16; vii, 58:40-59:1; vii, 59:4, 5.

²⁵ iii, 77:11-18.

teaching to discipline and hold together a large group of mystically minded people.²⁶

Fox's light convinces the Quaker of sin just as the Calvinist's grace convicts the Calvinist of sin.²⁷ But there is an important difference. For while Calvinism focuses the man's attention upon the sinfulness of his nature,²⁸ Fox, with a somewhat more optimistic view of man's nature, focuses the sinner's attention immediately upon the divine light which has revealed the sins.²⁹ The man is to turn immediately to the light from the sin which the light has revealed. The conviction of sin is less an emphasis upon sin than it is an emphasis upon the divineness and the sufficiency of the light.³⁰ So Fox usually drops the word sin altogether and simply speaks of the Quaker's conversion as conviction.³¹

Fox takes over the Puritan idea of the Covenant of Grace with faith in Christ as the prerequisite for salvation, but, by identifying the light within with Christ, he can insist that faith in the light is the one thing needful for salvation.³² If one turns to the

²⁶ vii, 74:7-12.

²⁷ iii, 48:27-35; iii, 127:11-15.

²⁸ See for example John Bunyan, *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners* and Richard Baxter, *Call to the Unconverted, To Turn and Live*.

²⁹ i, 12:34-37; i, 256:24-32; vii, 24:15-23.

³⁰ i, 44:17-22.

³¹ i, 28:11; i, 137:34-39; iii, 48:27-35; iii, 127:11-15.

³² There are many traces of the *Westminster Confession's* covenant terminology in Fox, but they are resemblances of terminology rather than of doctrine. The "covenant of Grace" becomes in Fox the "covenant of light." "(The light) is Christ . . . and so a saving light. For saith God, 'I will give him for a covenant, for a light to the Gentiles, that he may be my salvation to the ends of the earth'; to wit, the light shall: and all that are not in the light are in the fall, out of the covenant, in the unsaved state." iii, 91; compare Isaiah 49:6, 8. See also vii, 123:26-32; vii, 125:41; vii, 129:39. Redemption is the restoring of a man from the state of Adam in the

light one turns to Christ, for the light is Christ. This holds good whether or not a person recognizes the connection of the light with the historical Jesus. Thus Fox's teaching holds emphatically to an uncalvinistic universalism.³³

Fox says that the light *is* Christ but he says even more often that the light is *from* Christ.³⁴ The great emphasis is upon the divine indwelling in man—this is the point at which Fox is correcting the Puritanism which is around him—but he never loses the conception that Christ is also transcendent.

If the light within can be thought of as *from* Christ, there is greater reason for thinking of the light as the activity within man of an essentially transcendent Christ than there would be if the light was always simply said *to be* Christ. To differentiate between essence and activity in regard to Fox's light is somewhat misleading and not wholly accurate. Fox himself dodges philosophical distinctions and does not use the word *essence*.³⁵ But if we realize that Fox is speaking in pictures, and if we do not press the distinction to philosophical conclusions we can say that when Fox says that Christ, the light, by whom all things were made *is* the light within, that essence or being is predicated of light.³⁶ On the other hand,

fall to the state of Christ the second Adam, who never fell. This is accomplished by a man's turning of his own free will to live in the light. iii, 91:1-11; iii, 553; vii, 155:8-13. People living before the incarnation were also saved by Christ the light, for "Solomon said, 'the law is light,' and David said, 'the law was a light unto his feet, and a lamp unto his paths,' and so led him, and will lead them that do it, from the curse, and redeems from under it." iii, 48:38-41. The heathen also have saving light. iii, 64:1-9; iii, 139:9-13; iii, 307:1-10.

³³ iii, 62:15-19; iii, 115:3-11.

³⁴ See Chap. iv, note 32.

³⁵ iii, 291:28-292:8; iii, 400:25-33.

³⁶ i, 175:15-21; iii, 48:18-26.

where Fox says that the light within is *from* Christ there is greater reason to interpret the light simply as the *activity* of Christ instead of as *Christ* active.³⁷

It will be remembered that in discussing the nature of unregenerate man the seed was described as being Christ in man but not of man, pressed down and imprisoned by the wicked unregenerate nature. Since the seed is completely inactive until regeneration, it can,³⁸ until that time, only be described as the divine as substance with the potentiality of activity. In other words, by the difference in emphasis in the use of the two symbols Fox is able to suggest that at regeneration by the help of the transcendent divine, the potential divine within man becomes actual.

For when man turns to the light something happens to the seed. Fox speaks in ejaculations and is vague in describing causal relationships and temporal sequence, but at about the same time that the man turns to the light the power of God hammers down and ploughs up the thick cloddy evil nature of hypocrisy that imprisons the seed.³⁹ (Quaking is interpreted as the result of the violence of this experience.)⁴⁰ It will be remembered that the light is Christ⁴¹ and Christ is the power of God,⁴² and that "there is power given in the light to believe."⁴³ Man's free turning to the light makes possible the effecting of salvation within him by God.⁴⁴

³⁷ vii, 33:20, 21; vii, 76:3-6; vii, 158:29-32.

³⁸ iii, 248:30-38.

³⁹ i, 73:2-12; i, 82:40-83:6; i, 310:16-24; iii, 162:14-37; iii, 196:19-28; vii, 65:37-40; vii, 66:12,13.

⁴⁰ *Stereotype Journal* (Philadelphia), p. 66:26-35; iii, 162:14-37.

⁴¹ vii, 44:11.

⁴² vii, 44:32.

⁴³ iii, 95:31, 32.

⁴⁴ i, 146:35-147:11.

The relation of all this to Puritanism should be noted. Both have the grace of God showing man sin. Both have a period of trembling, with the Quakers often physical quaking. But with Puritanism the trembling is man's fear at the prospects of the penalty he will naturally reap for his sins and comes before his right adjustment to God.⁴⁵ With Fox the trembling seems to be thought of as coming after the pivotal act of turning to God and to be the result of part of the constructive activity of God in regenerating the man.⁴⁶

George Keith puts the thought of what happens within man at conversion less ambiguously than does Fox. Keith says that when man turns toward the light the light "reaches the seed."⁴⁷ Fox says that when a man turns toward the light the power of God "raiseth up the seed."⁴⁸ The seed is now become

⁴⁵ vii, 24:17-25; iii, 162:14-37. And see John Bunyan, *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners* and Richard Baxter, *Call to the Unconverted, To Turn and Live*.

⁴⁶ iii, 396:17-24; iii, 434:13-19; vii, 65:25-43.

⁴⁷ "But, now there is a Seed of God in Man, even in that State which is shut up in Death, or Darkness, under this earthly Wisdom, which as a vail blinds it, yet the Light of Christ shines so thorow the Vail in this State that it reaches the Seed. . . ." George Keith, *Immediate Revelation Not Ceased* (1675), pp. 169, 170. ". . . and so the Light shineth forth in the Darkness, to visit the Seed shut up therein, and the Light breathes Life into the Seed. . . ." George Keith, *Immediate Revelation Not Ceased* (1675), p. 76. ". . . And so to recover Man to the blessed state of Life he was created in, in the beginning, to bring up to live again in the pure Principle of the Life of the Lamb, which died not, could not die, as to its self; but man died from it, and it ceased to live in him, but it ever lived in itself, being an Eternal Incorruptible Life." George Keith, *Immediate Revelation Not Ceased* (1675), p. 75.

⁴⁸ "It is one power that raiseth up the seed." vii, 58:6, 7. ". . . soe every one stand in ye power of ye lord god yt reacheth ye seed of God, which is ye heire of ye promise of life without end." i, 320:16-18. "But all knowing one another in the light which was before the world was, this . . . brings you to know one another in the elect seed which was before the world was." vii, 141:37-41.

active and some change takes place in the being of man.

This is variously described. Where Fox is using the two seed theory he says that the seed of Christ gets on top of the seed of the devil.⁴⁹ Or, as parallel symbolism, he says that man is "renewed again into the image of God, and the image of the devil defaced."⁵⁰ Where Fox is thinking in Covenant terminology he says man is renewed from the state of Adam in the fall into Christ who never fell.⁵¹ Where his thoughts are rather on human nature and the one seed he says that the babe is born in you.⁵² Or when the seed becomes active the new man is born "of the immortal seed by the word and will of God."⁵³ He describes it elsewhere as the seed taking root and the plant of the Lord growing in you.⁵⁴

Some permanent union takes place between the

" . . . he that can own me here, and receive my testimony into his heart, the immortal seed is born up, . . . for the first step of peace is to stand still in the light (which discovers things contrary to it)." Fox, *To All That Would Know the Way to the Kingdom (Works, Philadelphia, 1831)*, vol. iv, p. 17:37-41. "And Christ saith beleive in ye light yt yee may become children of ye light & beleive & bee saved & hee yt beleiveth shall have everlastinge life: & hee yt beleiveth passes from death to life & is grafted Into Christ: & yee doe well yt yee take heede unto ye light yt shines in ye darke place untill ye day dawne & ye day starr arise in your heartes: so ye light is sufficient to layde unto ye day starr." i, 295:33-39. " . . . which moves throwes down & shakes all ye contrary which power reacheth to the seed of god & to that of god in every man." i, 83:2-4. " . . . and this word is a hammer, beating downe every thing yt ye seed of God may arrise upp." i, 73:5, 6. "And so the power of the mighty God of life be with you, which is raising up his living seed, and the seed is one, which is turning up the earth, and cleaving it asunder. . . ." vii, 65:37-39. See also i, 146:35-147:11.

⁴⁹ vii, 103:7-10.

⁵⁰ vii, 38:24, 25.

⁵¹ vii, 81:32-42; vii, 118:21-119:16.

⁵² vii, 23:28-36; vii, 71:21-34; vii, 122:30-37.

⁵³ vii, 57:36-39; vii, 106:6-9.

⁵⁴ vii, 32:8-12; vii, 54:4-6.

seed and the human nature. This brings us to Fox's theory of election and reprobation, for he takes over that terminology that is so characteristic of Calvinism and gives it a Foxian interpretation, just as he redefined the expression *free will*. Fox's theory of election centers about the seed. The seed figure in Fox has little dependence upon the parables of the sower in the Gospels. It depends upon the verse in the third chapter of Genesis where it is foretold that the seed of the woman (interpreted as Christ) shall bruise the head of the serpent,⁵⁵ and upon the verse in the third chapter of Galatians: "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ."⁵⁶ Fox's interpretation is that from the beginning God elected the seed, Christ. Christ is the elect.⁵⁷ Whenever, therefore, a union between the human and the seed takes place the promises apply to that union and *the man comes out of the reprobation into the election*.⁵⁸

Just what the nature of the union between the seed and the human nature is, and whether it is instantaneously complete or takes place progressively is not easy to determine. Fox claims that justification and sanctification are one.⁵⁹ He declares that after men are regenerate they neither sin nor are able to

⁵⁵ *Genesis* III:15; vii, 17:35; vii, 102:37-42; vii, 124:35-39; vii, 126:6; vii, 152:37; vii, 161:5; vii, 165:16, 17; vii, 178:22, 23; vii, 184:18; vii, 186:24, 25.

⁵⁶ *Galatians* III:16; i, 144:31-41; i, 153:4-6; i, 313:34-314:10; iii, 508:26-37. See also *I John* III:9, referred to in iii, 44:12-17; iii, 79:14, 15; iii, 109:5, 6; iii, 265:26; iii, 486:35, 36; vii, 57:24, 25.

⁵⁷ iii, 313:30-34; iii, 530:25-29; vii, 102:32-34.

⁵⁸ i, 27:6-11; i, 114:16-22; i, 277:32-278:5; i, 293:17-295:9; iii, 46:32-38; iii, 227:29; iii, 233:12-15; iii, 407:38-408:4; vii, 59:20, 21; vii, 104:7-15; vii, 175:42-176:9.

⁵⁹ iii, 487:33-42.

sin.⁶⁰ He condemns the priests for claiming that those who are justified are only sanctified gradually and that there are always traces of actual sin as a diminishing quantity in the regenerate.⁶¹ Fox says there is "a time for men to see they had sinned, and a time to see they had sin, and a time to confess it and forsake it, and a time to witness the blood of Jesus Christ to cleanse from all sin, a time to witness the birth of God born, which doth not commit sin."⁶² He says that St. Paul spoke wisdom among them that were perfect.⁶³ He claims complete lack of error for the divine spirit within a man and since the man after regeneration is joined to this spirit he claims complete lack of error for the saints.⁶⁴ The saints sit with Christ in heavenly places and judge the world.⁶⁵ "He that is perfect, as his heavenly Father is perfect, is perfect as he is perfect."⁶⁶ Fox preaches the perseverance of the saints.⁶⁷

The union is so much a human putting on of the divine that salvation can be described as a deification of man.⁶⁸ Fox quotes with approval the Bible passages that say that the bodies of the saints "are the temples of God and Christ and the Holy Ghost for them to dwell in them and walk in them,"⁶⁹ and "I live, yet not I, but Christ in me,"⁷⁰ and "as he is so

⁶⁰ iii, 69:32-39; iii, 109:3-11; iii, 449:23-30; see *I John* 3:9.

⁶¹ iii, 79:7-18; iii, 265:16-28.

⁶² iii, 44:12-17; iii, 164:42-165:2.

⁶³ iii, 56:23-27.

⁶⁴ iii, 62:20-28; iii, 84:1-12; iii, 445:8-17.

⁶⁵ i, 65:26-28; iii, 340:36, 37.

⁶⁶ iii, 324:37-325:4.

⁶⁷ iii, 79:7-18; iii, 265:16-28; iii, 445:8-17.

⁶⁸ iii, 34:29-34; iii, 165:4-12; iii, 233:31-34.

⁶⁹ i, 56:39-41; i, 68:40, 41; i, 139:33, 34; iii, 57:3-7; iii, 233:9, 10; vii, 27:7, 8.

⁷⁰ iii, 40:19-25.

are we in this present world.”⁷¹ At the ascension the body of Christ did not go away from the saints into heaven and so become separate from the saints, but when Christ ascended his body went into his saints⁷² which are the church which is the body of Christ.⁷³ And yet the body of Christ is not merely the church or not merely in the saints because Fox says that Christ gives his blood to the saints constantly for their nourishment.⁷⁴ This is no mere figure of speech, for Fox can mystically feel the blood within as he can feel the light within⁷⁵ or the darkness. Fox is completely optimistic about the spiritual state of the saints.

On the other hand it must be admitted that the foregoing passages state Fox's extreme position. The unqualified claims for the sinlessness and perfection of regenerate individuals occur in *The Great Mystery* where he is pushed to extremes in combatting his Calvinistic opponents who declare that although the saints are freely justified by God, yet in this vale of tears the actual progress to moral perfection is slow and incomplete, and ‘the children of God are all their life time found groaning under sin,’⁷⁶ and trust that God will pardon for Christ's sake the sins that even the regenerate will commit, for ‘Christ's kingdom is a hospital, and hath no subjects in it but dis-

⁷¹ i, 66:8-11; i, 69:38, 39.

⁷² iii, 344:6-32. This is Fox's controversy with John Bunyan.

⁷³ iii, 51:13-23; vii, 27:8-10.

⁷⁴ iii, 49:12-17; iii, 345:28-37.

⁷⁵ iii, 268:43-269:2; *Stereotype Journal* (Philadelphia), p. 67:5-12. The experience of the body and blood of Christ is entirely a spiritual experience. Fox does not believe in the outward administration of that sacrament. iii, 103:1-10; iii, 405:24-29.

⁷⁶ iii, 69:32-39; iii, 94:44-95:2.

eased ones.' ⁷⁷ Fox never speaks of a forgiving or pardoning of sin, ⁷⁸ but of a forsaking of sin, a cleansing from sin, a dying to sin. ⁷⁹ He believed that a just God could not justify men on the basis of an imputed righteousness, ⁸⁰ and he also believed that God demands actual righteousness from men and so makes it possible for them to be actually righteous. ⁸¹ Fox objected to the Puritan doctrine of justification because in theory it satisfied God's demand for personal righteousness in his followers by something other than their personal righteousness, and because in general *professors* were not actually as righteous in practice as Fox thought Christians should be. ⁸² Fox thinks that God demands an actual moral transformation of men and to this end Christ gives himself to each man so that each man can turn to Christ and have Christ and so actually be made pure. ⁸³ When Fox is pushed by his opponents to the logical conclusions of his position he arrives at perfectionism. ⁸⁴

However, when he is writing pastoral letters to Friends and does not have to consider his opponents, Fox is much more temperate in the claims that he makes for the perfection of regenerate individuals. The difference between this unbounded confidence and this greater temperance is not the difference between a very young and an older and more disillusioned man. The perfectionist claims occur in

⁷⁷ iii, 79:19-33.

⁷⁸ Except in practical personal situations, see i, 13:26, 27.

⁷⁹ iii, 38:40-39:3; iii, 44:6-17; iii, 69:32-39; iii, 79:19-33; iii, 164:35-165:3.

⁸⁰ iii, 487:19-42.

⁸¹ iii, 271:25-34; iii, 530:13-22; iii, 552:42-553:12.

⁸² i, 3:21-4:12; iii, 487:19-488:2.

⁸³ i, 20:27-37; vii, 149:9-41.

⁸⁴ iii, 445:8-17.

their extreme form in *The Great Mystery* which Fox wrote in 1658 and 1659. The more temperate claims are to be found in his *Letters* as early as from 1650 to 1653 at the beginning of his ministry.⁸⁵

Fox does not really solve the problem of how perfection can exist in man,⁸⁶ but he appears to solve it by always keeping a subject-object relationship between the human and the divine within man.⁸⁷ Fox starts with the moral and religious problem created by Calvinism's over-emphasis on the complete otherness of God. Fox brings God down to dwell in men. Fox knows that God is within him, for he can feel him within.⁸⁸ There is something safe and satisfying in the discovery. Man can turn to this divine within him and all will be well with him. Man is so made by God that this turning to the divine is the normal way for human nature to act. The light is not nature but it leads nature into its right course.⁸⁹ The light is not reason, but it leads to true reason.⁹⁰ But the intimacy of the divine with the human in Fox's teaching never blurs the distinction between them.⁹¹ His teaching of the divine indwelling never descends to a superficial cosiness.⁹² In Fox the two

⁸⁵ vii, 18:30; vii, 19:2, 3; vii, 20:34, 35; vii, 21:31; vii, 23:30; vii, 23:39-41; vii, 27:18; vii, 28:5, 6; vii, 39:19-22; vii, 44:17, 18; vii, 44:35-37; vii, 45:8-13; vii, 56:36-57:2; vii, 57:10; vii, 61:24-26; vii, 63:7-12; vii, 64:4-7; vii, 65:9-11; vii, 66:21; vii, 70:42.

⁸⁶ iii, 338:21-26; iii, 455:36-456:3.

⁸⁷ vii, 37:43-38:1.

⁸⁸ vii, 92:16, 27, 34; vii, 93:14; vii, 101:28; vii, 104:2; vii, 106:23-26; vii, 116:15; vii, 124:23; vii, 131:24, 25; vii, 138:28; vii, 146:1, 2; vii, 152:34, 35; vii, 153:26; vii, 171:13; vii, 172:12, 13, 33; vii, 174:24; vii, 175:42.

⁸⁹ iii, 92:12-18; vii, 35:31-38; vii, 97:30-41.

⁹⁰ iii, 64:30-37; iii, 92:12-18; vii, 97:30-41.

⁹¹ i, 66:6-23.

⁹² *Stereotype Journal* (Philadelphia), Penn's Preface, p. xxvii: 39-46.

emphases of the moral and the mystical are parallel, neither one made secondary to the other. The result is that he works out penetrating directions for leading the spiritual life, but he leaves the speculative problem, as a problem, very much as he found it.

The fact that the divine within continues even after regeneration to be thought of as something other than the human being⁹³ is evidenced by Fox's saying that he had Christ within him but his denying that he ever said that he "was equal with God."⁹⁴ Fox hated Priest Lampitt for being a perfectionist and a Ranter.⁹⁵ Fox was scandalized at some other Ranters who said that "they were God." He asked them if they could tell whether it would rain the next day. "They said they could not tell." Fox said "God could tell."⁹⁶ Fox was horrified at James Naylor's near-confusion of the human individual with the divine. Fox said of Naylor that he resisted the power of God in him (*i.e.*, in Fox).⁹⁷ He said to another, "I have that spirit dwelling in me of the father which speaks to you."⁹⁸ His expressions give almost the impression of daemon possession.⁹⁹

Even more illuminating is the fact that although Fox says that at regeneration the seed takes root,¹⁰⁰ or the new man is "born again of the immortal seed,"¹⁰¹ the seed continues even after regeneration

⁹³ i, 147:38-148:2.

⁹⁴ i, 64:33-65:15.

⁹⁵ i, 47:21-41.

⁹⁶ *Stereotype Journal* (Philadelphia), p. 79:14-41.

⁹⁷ i, 243, 244.

⁹⁸ i, 66:29, 30.

⁹⁹ i, 20:27-37; i, 34:5-26; i, 66:6-23; i, 66:29-67:5; i, 147:38-148:2; iii, 291:14-22.

¹⁰⁰ vii, 32:1-12.

¹⁰¹ vii, 23:35, 36.

to be thought of as something other than man.¹⁰² The difference is that before regeneration the seed is imprisoned and dormant.¹⁰³ After regeneration the seed is living and reigning.¹⁰⁴ But Fox constantly cautions well-established Friends to dwell in the seed,¹⁰⁵ to keep down to the seed,¹⁰⁶ and to keep out of that wilfulness and foolishness and frothiness that oppresses the seed.¹⁰⁷ Furthermore there is some vagueness as to whether the plant of the Lord is the whole man after regeneration or whether it is the divine growing within the man.¹⁰⁸ Fox says, "Wait upon the living God to nourish the tender plant in you,"¹⁰⁹ thus giving the impression that the divine plant is not coextensive with the human being after regeneration. Again, all the counsels that Fox gives to Friends warning them against evil thoughts and deeds indicate that he does not think that the whole individual is perfect immediately after conviction, or rather that he does think of regeneration as a gradual affair.¹¹⁰ The most conclusive statement of this is a letter warning Friends to "Get not

¹⁰² vii, 74:24-30; vii, 104:12-18; vii, 106:5-12; vii, 129:1-7.

¹⁰³ iii, 46:32-38; iii, 508:24-37.

¹⁰⁴ vii, 28:26; vii, 102:26-33.

¹⁰⁵ vii, 74:24-30; vii, 129:1-7.

¹⁰⁶ vii, 102:31.

¹⁰⁷ vii, 102:26-33.

¹⁰⁸ iii, 347:7-21; vii, 35:12-17; vii, 53:44-54:8; vii, 65:20-24; vii, 93:13-15; vii, 112:26-30; vii, 129:1-7.

¹⁰⁹ vii, 54:4, 5.

¹¹⁰ vii, 18:30; vii, 19:2, 3; vii, 20:34, 35; vii, 21:31; vii, 22:20; vii, 22:42; vii, 23:30; vii, 23:39-41; vii, 27:18; vii, 28:5, 6; vii, 37:41; vii, 38:42-45; vii, 39:19-22; vii, 41:28; vii, 43:31-33; vii, 44:17, 18, 22, 23, 35-37; vii, 45:8-13; vii, 52:12-17; vii, 56:36-57:2; vii, 57:10; vii, 61:24-26; vii, 63:7-12; vii, 64:4-7, 39, 40; vii, 65:9-11; vii, 66:21; vii, 70:42. The above passages are all from the *Letters* written before 1654. See also vii, 166:13-15; vii, 168:25, 26; vii, 170:37-42; vii, 173:43; vii, 176:1; vii, 176:14-16; vii, 177:9, 10, 41; vii 178:5, 6; vii, 180:12.

knowledge in the unsanctified and unregenerated part.”¹¹¹ In other words, practically speaking, Fox allowed for a gradual perfecting of men as did Puritanism. The difference is in Fox’s greater optimism as to the degree and quickness with which men can be perfected, his emphasis on the actual perfection of such progress as has already been made,¹¹² and his emphasis on his confidence that God constantly dwells and works in man. Fox had great confidence in the moral uprightness of Friends as individual men and women, but theoretically he seems to have believed that the regenerate man grew gradually within the human being and that it is only the regenerate man that is sinless. However, when the individual is faced toward the divine it is the regenerate part of him that is important.¹¹³ In other words, Fox’s theory actually describes sin after regeneration as a lingering but vanishing quantity,¹¹⁴ and so his view is not as unlike Puritanism as would at first appear. Fox’s denial of all sin to the saints and his declaration that all the saints are in Christ¹¹⁵ and so have no sin because there is no sin in Christ¹¹⁶ does not really entirely cover the subject.¹¹⁷

After conversion has taken place and regeneration has either fully taken place or begun—depending on how one interprets Fox at this point—the divine life is active in the man, and not merely potential. That is, before regeneration, the light which tends to be thought of as the transcendent God functioning in-

¹¹¹ vii, 137:27-31.

¹¹² iii, 152:33-153:1; iii, 432:28-42.

¹¹³ iii, 401:23-34.

¹¹⁴ vii, 71:36-41.

¹¹⁵ iii, 256:29-38.

¹¹⁶ iii, 206:22-37.

¹¹⁷ i, 2:25-37; iii, 128:18-32; iii, 305:16-30; iii, 413:9-36.

wardly is active, but the seed is dormant.¹¹⁸ But after regeneration the seed, which is the divine as essence or being, is also active in the man,¹¹⁹ so that the man after regeneration has a source of the divine within himself in a way that he did not have it before.¹²⁰ This is what Fox is referring to when he says he felt the power or the life spring up or rise up in him.¹²¹ The whole picture of regeneration is beautifully summed up in a verse that Fox is very fond of quoting: "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well to take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the daystar arises in your hearts."¹²² This divine that rises in man is thought of as Christ within, the same Christ who had 1600 years before been born of the Virgin Mary as the historical Jesus. It is not thought of as man's better nature or as the diviner side of human nature, or as the soul.¹²³ The

¹¹⁸ iii, 292:9-24; iii, 312:1-10; iii, 353:24-28; vii, 76:3-6.

¹¹⁹ vii, 65:37-40; vii, 102:31-43.

¹²⁰ iii, 46:32-38; iii, 266:8; vii, 93:14; vii, 113:40.

¹²¹ i, 260:13; i, 311:16; vii, 113:37-41; vii, 138:7-10.

¹²² *II Peter* 1:19. See i, 295:33-39; iii, 115:35-116:2; iii, 456:29-457:2.

¹²³ vii, 122:30-37. Fox does not hold that the light, Christ, was related to the human nature of the historical Jesus in the same way that the light, Christ, is related to the human nature of George Fox. Fox does not believe that the historical Jesus had a human nature: the historical Jesus was the pre-existent Christ, or Christ the light, inhabiting a human body. iii, 139:41-140:2; iii, 396:35-42. If one is studying the life of Christ and holds this view this view tends to make Christ seem unhuman. If, however, one loses historical perspective and emphasizes entirely the divine light within the individual as the complete guide in faith and practice, there is a certain stabilizing effect in thinking that the earthly Jesus is entirely the pre-existent Christ, because it means that the light within the individual is identified with the total historical Jesus, and this gives a fullness and richness to the conception of the light that would be lacking were historical perspective lost and the light thought of as the divine guide of both the historical Jesus and later Christians. iii, 337:41-338:11; iii, 66:38-67:6; iii, 183:10-17; vii, 122:30-37; iii, 140:3-10.

human nature, having turned toward the light to live in it, is enabled to come into harmony, unity, or union with this seed, Christ within,¹²⁴ and the soul, which is in God's hand, lives and goes to God again.¹²⁵

The rising up of Christ as the seed within does not mean that man ceases to have an important relationship to God and Christ transcendent.¹²⁶ The power is still said to be over all.¹²⁷ The Christian comes "to feed on the bread of life, that comes from above."¹²⁸ The light is nourishment.¹²⁹ God the fountain of light and life waters the tender plants.¹³⁰ The dew of heaven is falling to water the tender plants.¹³¹

In trying to understand Fox and his symbolism and his general interpretation of regeneration, one of the safest threads out of his labyrinth of terms is the remembrance that Fox is very fond of what might be called a garden symbolism of regeneration. Christ grew up in the hill country of Palestine and we think of the shepherd symbolism for the religious life as peculiarly Christ's. Fox spent the years of his youth before the beginning of his ministry wandering up and down the countryside of England, and it is easy to understand how this homely agricultural symbolism is peculiarly congenial to him:

¹²⁴ vii, 101:17-24; vii, 102:26-33; vii, 103:2-4; vii, 104:12-18.

¹²⁵ iii, 167:26-33; iii, 181:4-9.

¹²⁶ i, 14:32,33; vii, 55:1-13; vii, 74:7-12; vii, 158:29-32.

¹²⁷ vii, 124:8-10.

¹²⁸ vii, 124:39, 40.

¹²⁹ i, 137:34-39; vii, 33:18; vii, 65:22-30; vii, 122:34-42; vii, 147:40-43.

¹³⁰ i, 137:34-39; iii, 188:24-36; iii, 385:39-43; vii, 28:30-32; vii, 31:20, 21; vii, 65:20-24; vii, 147:40-43.

¹³¹ vii, 35:12-17.

there is a divine seed of God in man imprisoned in and pressed down by the dark cloddy sinful nature;¹³² but when man turns to the light of Christ which shines in his heart the power of God ploughs up and hammers down that dark cloddy sinful nature that imprisons the seed;¹³³ the seed takes root;¹³⁴ the seed can get on top of the nature that imprisons it;¹³⁵ the plant of the Lord grows;¹³⁶ the light is nourishment;¹³⁷ God the fountain of light and life waters the tender plants;¹³⁸ the dew from heaven falls to water the tender plants.¹³⁹

It should be noted that in spite of Fox's fondness for garden symbolism in describing regeneration he does not think of God or the light or seed as in any sense indwelling in non-human nature.¹⁴⁰ For Fox as for Puritanism God's relation to the non-human world is merely that of creator, sustainer, and governor.¹⁴¹

¹³² i, 310:16-24; iii, 162:27-29.

¹³³ iii, 162:27-29; vii, 65:33-44.

¹³⁴ vii, 32:1-12.

¹³⁵ iii, 46:32-38; iii, 508:24-37; vii, 102:26-33; vii, 104:12-18.

¹³⁶ vii, 118:6-10; vii, 147:40-43.

¹³⁷ vii, 33:18; vii, 65:22-24; vii, 147:40-43.

¹³⁸ i, 137:34-39; iii, 188:24-36; iii, 385:39-43; vii, 28:30-32; vii, 31:20, 21; vii, 65:20-24; vii, 147:40-43.

¹³⁹ vii, 21:15-18, 24, 25; vii, 35:12-17; vii, 113:37-41.

¹⁴⁰ vii, 117:44-118:16; vii, 141:33-38.

¹⁴¹ vii, 73:23-28. It should be noted that Fox is careful not to liken the divine light to the sun. This is because he is combating his opponents' claim that the Quakers' light is a natural and so a delusive light. Fox believes that the light is thoroughly supernatural and he avoids any comparison or symbolism that would seem to lend any foundation to his opponents' claim that the Quakers' light is natural. Fox answers his opponents by saying that the natural lights are the created lights, the sun, moon, and stars, but that the Quakers' light is not these at all, for the Quakers' light is Christ. See iii, 68:42-69:9; iii, 261:10-42.

In discussing Fox's theory of regeneration a word should be said of his theory of the Holy Ghost. Broadly speaking, Fox's teaching was a re-emphasis on the belief in the Holy Ghost.¹⁴² He uses the term, Holy Ghost, quite often, and probably one reason that he does not use it more is that for him it has theological connotations while light has experiential connotations. There is a general identification of the Holy Ghost with the light.¹⁴³ Fox quotes *John* as saying, "I will send you the Comforter, the spirit of truth," which "shall reprove the world of sin."¹⁴⁴ Fox's light is the spirit of truth within and the light reproves the world of sin.¹⁴⁵ The Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and the Son.¹⁴⁶ The light is usually said to come from Christ to show men the way to God, and the light is sometimes said to come from God and Christ.¹⁴⁷ Those who resist the light resist the Holy Ghost.¹⁴⁸ The Apostles gave forth the scriptures under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost.¹⁴⁹ The Apostles gave forth the scriptures under the inspiration of the light.¹⁵⁰

And yet Fox does say in the *Great Mystery*, "He that hates the light . . . is not like to receive the

¹⁴² iii, 49:17-21; iii, 112:1, 2, 4-6; iii, 133:33-42; iii, 463:37-43; vii, 275:26-30.

¹⁴³ iii, 107:1-7; iii, 413:21-36; vii, 53:28-33.

¹⁴⁴ i, 313:11-16; iii, 47:17-26.

¹⁴⁵ iii, 261:32-34; vii, 147:32-38; vii, 148:10; vii, 155:4-11; Fox, *To All That Would Know the Way to the Kingdom* (Works, Philadelphia, 1831, vol. iv), pp. 17, 20; iii, 188:38-189:2.

¹⁴⁶ iii, 180:1-18.

¹⁴⁷ iii, 49:17-21; vii, 34:14-22; vii, 123:22-25; vii, 158:34-36.

¹⁴⁸ Norman Penney (editor), *The Journal of George Fox* (Cambridge, 1911), ii, 63:25-38.

¹⁴⁹ iii, 221:33-35.

¹⁵⁰ iii, 225:19-22.

spirit,"¹⁵¹ and in the *Journal*, "many was turned from the darkness to the light . . . and came to receive the Holy Ghost."¹⁵² The distinction that he makes seems to be that until a person turns to the light and is regenerated he does not feel the full effect of the light. Fox sometimes speaks of a man's measure of light, and he interprets the difference in measure not as a difference in the degree of light given to various individuals, but as the degree to which the various individuals have turned toward the unvariable light.¹⁵³ Until a man turns to the light the light shines in his heart and shows him sin, and sufficient strength is given with the light so that the man can turn to it.¹⁵⁴ That is, before the pivotal human step in conversion, each man's experience of the light is sufficient to enable him to make that step.¹⁵⁵ But the experience of the light that a man has before he turns to live in it is not complete and satisfying as is the experience he has after he turns to live in the light and becomes a child of the light.¹⁵⁶ It is the light in this more fully experienced aspect that Fox typically means when

¹⁵¹ iii, 342:25-30; vii, 65:5-8.

¹⁵² i, 195:28-33; iii, 122:17-23.

¹⁵³ iii, 282:26-30; iii, 437:4-7; vii, 23:30, 31; vii, 66:15-22.

¹⁵⁴ iii, 95:27-34; iii, 437:4-7.

¹⁵⁵ iii, 142:26-40. All sinners and unregenerate people have the light. The thing that makes men sinners and unregenerate is simply that they constantly reject the light. See *John* III:19-21 and i, 89:20-40; i, 100:13-27; i, 83:15-41. A person cannot reject what he does not have. Norman Penney (editor), *The Journal of George Fox* (Cambridge, 1911), ii, 63:25-38.

¹⁵⁶ See Chap. iv, note 1. When one turns to live in the light he experiences unity in the light. This is an experience of blessedness that he does not have before he surrenders to the light. See the relative amount of use of the definition of the light as that in which is unity in the *Letters* and the *Journal*.

he speaks of the light as the Holy Spirit,¹⁵⁷ as nourishment, and as the anointing within.¹⁵⁸ On the other hand it is the same light both before and after conversion,¹⁵⁹ and its primary definition as that which shows a man evil is the same both before and after conversion.

¹⁵⁷ i, 195:28-33; vii, 69:7-12.

¹⁵⁸ iii, 103:1-10; vii, 129:33-36; vii, 147:40-43; vii, 148:4-12.

¹⁵⁹ iii, 49:34-50:2; iii, 91:12-21.

CHAPTER IV

THE LIGHT WHICH SHOWS A MAN EVIL

The light is that which shows a man evil.¹ It is through the consequences of this primary working definition of the mystically felt² light that we see most clearly Fox's craving for the One and the unchangeable combined with his insistence on the everlasting validity of moral distinctions.³ The balance of these two factors is what gives him his characteristic relationship to the general development of Catholic mysticism, to Puritan Calvinism, to Ranterism, and to the general rationalistic tendencies of his day.

¹ The references to the light which show a man evil and to the light in which is unity in i and vii are as follows. For the light which shows a man evil in the *Journal* see i, 12:34-37; i, 28:34, 35; i, 31:18-22; i, 50:12-14; i, 50:15-19; i, 70:10, 11; i, 89:20-22; i, 93:15; i, 93:5-7; i, 94:25-29; i, 100:17-25; i, 113:4, 5; i, 147:3, 4; i, 197:27, 28; i, 202:25-27; i, 204:14, 15; i, 205:1; i, 206:30, 31; i, 206:35-38; i, 272:20, 21; i, 282:32, 33; i, 284:5, 6; i, 306:12, 13; i, 335:29-32; i, 341:3, 4; and in the *Letters* see vii, 18:11, 12; vii, 21:1-3; vii, 24:19-21; vii, 24:25; vii, 25:11, 12; vii, 29:15, 16; vii, 33:1, 2; vii, 33:5, 6; vii, 34:14-18; vii, 53:29; vii, 54:12; vii, 54:15, 16; vii, 63:10; vii, 63:16, 17; vii, 64:39, 40; vii, 65:42, 43; vii, 67:18-20; vii, 77:11, 12; vii, 77:17-19; vii, 83:2; vii, 89:30-33; vii, 96:3-5; vii, 125:16, 17; vii, 131:26-29; vii, 137:39-138:2. For the light in which is unity in the *Journal* see i, 218:7-9; i, 219:10-13; i, 329:31-38; i, 331:3-8; and in the *Letters* see #*vii, 28:30-32; *vii, 33:24; vii, 33:25, 26; vii, 33:43-34:7; vii, 45:25; *vii, 54:3; vii, 58:1; vii, 61:29, 30; vii, 65:7, 8; vii, 76:31, 32; *vii, 78:2, 3; #vii, 79:24, 25; #*vii, 87:17-19; vii, 94:13, 14; *vii, 94:22, 23; vii, 101:7-9; *vii, 114:23-26; *vii, 119:32-34; #vii, 125:19; vii, 129:32; vii, 136:41-137:2; *vii, 138:15, 16; #vii, 141:33-38; vii, 142:2; #*vii, 142:3-7; vii, 142:11, 12; vii, 145:10; #*vii, 150:25-28; vii, 155:21, 22; *vii, 157:4, 5; #*vii, 158:34-36; #*vii, 175:33-36; vii, 179:13, 14; #*vii, 187:33-37. (Specified unity with God or Christ is indicated thus *; specified unity with other people is indicated thus #.)

² iii, 437:4-7.

³ iii, 518:41-519:2.

There is no need to draw a detailed comparison of Fox to Roman Catholicism, because Fox was conditioned by a Puritan environment and his innovations in belief were innovations related to and differing from Puritanism rather than Catholicism. But since Puritanism's extreme emphasis on the Bible fostered a literalism and a legalism uncongenial to mysticism and since the whole general movement of which Fox was the most outstanding individual was a mystically fostered re-emphasis on the sufficiency of direct individual inspiration, something should be said about the difference between Foxian and Catholic mysticism.⁴ If a sweeping generalization is made to indicate the difference, it can be said that Fox's emphasis in defining the light as that which shows a man evil on the one hand eliminates a *Lichtmetaphysik*, and on the other hand orients the conception of the light—and so of Fox's whole mysticism—away from any primary emphasis upon love, or any primary connection of light with love.

Lichtmetaphysik came into Christianity from Neoplatonic sources.⁵ It describes God as light and the source of light, whose outstreaming beams diminish in divinity the farther they go from their source,⁶ so that intellectual light is thought of as more divine than physical light, and physical light as more divine than the darkness or near darkness of matter.⁷ Thus all things have their position in the hierarchy of being according to their degree of participation in light.⁸ Since the physical is thought of as at least

⁴ Rufus M. Jones, *George Fox Seeker and Friend* (New York, 1930), pp. 24-26.

⁵ C. Baeumker, *Witelo* (Münster, 1908), pp. 369-377.

⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 357, 358, 368, 369, 371.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 377.

⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 398, 399.

very close to darkness or non-being, salvation is thought of in terms of the human spirit's turning away from matter toward God as the source of all being.⁹ This description of reality lends itself very easily as an interpretation of intense mystical experience, for it gives a theoretical explanation for the Christian mystic's assurance that God is all, and at the same time does justice to his confidence that there are degrees of reality and that God is not the All in merely the sense in which pantheism equates the sum of existence with God. The influence of Neoplatonic *Lichtmetaphysik* continued to make its appearance in some of the mystics of the Catholic church. We find traces of it in Augustine, Dionysius the Areopagite, Bonaventura, Alexander of Hales, and Albertus Magnus.¹⁰ Thomas Aquinas does not have a *Lichtmetaphysik*,¹¹ but even so there is enough of it in Catholic mystics of good standing to warrant our saying that had Fox had a *Lichtmetaphysik* it would have brought his mysticism to that extent away from the decided dualism of Calvinism into something more nearly resembling a development in Catholic mysticism.

As a matter of fact Fox's light within is not part of any general *Lichtmetaphysik*. Fox simply assumes in Puritan fashion that God's relation to the non-human world is that of creator, sustainer, and governor. There is no divine light in the non-human world.¹² Even in the case of human beings it cannot

⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 410, 411. Fox does not think of matter as such as evil. See vii, 149:9-11.

¹⁰ C. Baeumker, *Witelo* (Münster, 1908), pp. 372 ff, 377, 393, 394 ff, 407 ff.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 415-417.

¹² vii, 41:13-16; vii, 149:30-34; *Stereotype Journal* (Philadelphia), p. 68:6-21; iii, 68:42-69:9; iii, 261:10-42.

be said that Fox believes that the degree of their existence is equivalent to the degree of their participation in light. Human beings are created by God as are all the other things in the world.¹³ The divine and eternal light which is in men is not of them. The light is Christ and is above nature and reason and leads nature and reason into its right course.¹⁴ It is not quite fair to Fox's thought to say that, since he says everyone has the light because "the light lighteth every man that cometh into the world," he therefore is really saying the divine light is part of the man.¹⁵ It is the principle of revelation, the guide to God, and, in general, only as it is lived in does it come to be described as the blood of Christ,¹⁶ the food of the spiritual life.¹⁷ Until conversion a man's relation to the light within is entirely one of opposition.¹⁸ All men have the light within only in the sense that all men have the light constantly accessible to them and have constantly sufficient discernment and ability to turn to it. It is this that makes possible Fox's sharp distinction between those living in the light and those not living in the light.¹⁹ Had the light been like *Lichtmetaphysik* in being thought

¹³ iii, 481:33-482:2. Note the difficulty which Fox has in trying to work into his picture a doctrine of the soul. He needs the doctrine of the soul which is not created in the way the phenomenal is created and so is not transient as the phenomenal is transient, but he finds it impossible to give his doctrine of the immortal soul which is an emanation of God any satisfactory place in his thought. See Chap. ii. See also iii, 553:2, 3.

¹⁴ i, 96:20-27; i, 218:35-219:4; iii, 49:29-33; iii, 52:1-8; iii, 64:30-37; iii, 92:12-18; iii, 168:1-17; iii, 341:9-26; iii, 346:41-347:3; iii, 518:41-519:2; vii, 35:31-38; vii, 97:30-41.

¹⁵ iii, 95:27-34.

¹⁶ iii, 268:31-269:5; iii, 292:13-21.

¹⁷ vii, 65:27, 28.

¹⁸ iii, 306:28-40.

¹⁹ iii, 407:18-25.

of as something in which each man as man participates,²⁰ then the difference between men would have been the difference in degree of participation, and so there would not have been two definite groups—those living in the light and those not living in the light,²¹ which point of view makes sect building possible²²—but people would all have been thought of as at different degrees of participation in light in one and the same light scale, and Quakerism would have become a mystical tendency leavening an established religious order, as mysticism leavens Catholicism, instead of becoming a separate sect as it soon actually became.

Furthermore, according to *Lichtmetaphysik*, the light is thought of in terms of being, with the distinctions of right and wrong as secondary considerations; with Fox the distinguishing feature of the light is that it has to do with moral right and wrong. Fox does not define evil as an absence of good or as non-being, as a thorough-going mysticism tends to do because of its emphasis upon the allness of God.²³ Fox simply takes over the traditional Christian explanation that God created everything good includ-

²⁰ C. Baumer, *Witelo* (Münster, 1908), pp. 385-386.

²¹ iii, 37:1-8.

²² vii, 47:30-35; vii, 146:32-35; vii, 180:24-181:13.

²³ Dionysius the Areopagite, who exerted a great influence on Roman Catholic mysticism, describes evil as the lack of being or the absence of good. See Arthur Cushman McGiffert, *A History of Christian Thought* (New York, 1932), vol. i, pp. 297, 307. See Evelyn Underhill, *Mysticism, A Study in the Nature and Development of Man's Spiritual Consciousness* (New York, E. P. Dutton and Co., New Edition), pp. 125, 545. St. Augustine, also explained evil by the tendency of all created things to lapse into nothingness. See Arthur Cushman McGiffert, *A History of Christian Thought* (New York, 1933), vol. ii, pp. 89, 90. Fox, *To All That Would Know the Way to the Kingdom* (*Works*, Philadelphia, 1831), vol. iv, p. 20; iii, 437:11-21; iii, 460:25-33; vii, 149:25-35.

ing Satan, and that Satan afterwards fell.²⁴ From then on there is a dualism of good and evil.²⁵ The conception of Satan as a being tends to merge into the more abstract conception of evil as the spirit of this world.²⁶ God as the creator of the world is thought of as more permanent than any evil,²⁷ but Satan or evils are not at all shadowy and unreal.²⁸

That Fox does not have a *Lichtmetaphysik* is not entirely due to the possibility that as he grew up in a Protestant country he would have had no way of getting in touch with that type of thought. There was an awakened interest in mystical writing in the seventeenth century. The learned John Everard was much interested in the writing of Dionysius the Areopagite, and made an English translation of his *Mystical Divinity*.²⁹ The influence of Dionysius upon Everard is particularly important because Everard, who was an earlier contemporary of Fox, is thought by Rufus M. Jones to be the father of the Seeker movement, which movement Professor Jones considers to be the closest spiritual antecedent of Quakerism.³⁰ Everard has a definite *Lichtmetaphysik*: God is light; he is veiled from our sight by accidents; if we could truly see we would see that the eternal God flows into all creatures as the river Thames flows into all its adjoining creeks; the dis-

²⁴ i, 185:7-18; iii, 102:7-12.

²⁵ iii, 437:11-22; vii, 133:12-25.

²⁶ Fox uses "children of the devil" and "children of this world" synonymously in opposition to "children of God," vii, 16:31-17:21; vii, 31:26-38; vii, 55:41-56:7; vii, 70:7-20; vii, 86:6-9; vii, 147:32-35.

²⁷ vii, 137:15-21. See also vii, 155:21-25.

²⁸ iii, 162:14-37.

²⁹ This was first printed in 1653, after Everard's death.

³⁰ Rufus M. Jones, *Mysticism and Democracy in the English Commonwealth* (Cambridge, Mass., 1932), pp. 77, 91, 95, 96; and *Studies in Mystical Religion* (London, 1909), p. 465.

cipline required for the return of the soul to God includes the *via negativa* which is common where matter as such is thought to be a hindrance; the final goal is the return of the soul into God so that the individual becomes swallowed up in an everlasting abyss of silence and serenity.³¹ Fox does not hold any of these ideas. His ideas at each of these points stand in closer relation to Calvinistic Puritanism than do Everard's.

It is to be noticed that Fox typically thinks of Christ rather than of God as light.³² He uses the verse that describes God as the "Father of lights" very seldom.³³ The other three Bible verses that lend themselves easily to a *Lichtmetaphysik* interpretation he uses even less.³⁴

In addition to the lack of a *Lichtmetaphysik* the other great difference of Fox's mysticism from the general development of Roman Catholic mysticism lies in Fox's lack of emphasis upon love.³⁵ There is a noticeable lack of erotic imagery in Fox's writings. This is partly due to Fox's inherited Puritan-

³¹ John Everard, *Some Gospel-Treasures Opened* (London, 1653), pp. 341, 342, 381, 387, 425, 636, 637, 641.

³² In i, 260-306 and iii, 206-269 and vii, 18-71, 133-188 I have counted the instances in which Fox uses such expressions as the light is Christ, the light is from or of Christ, or from or of God. I find that Fox relates the light to God only twenty times while he relates it to Christ one hundred twelve times. Of the latter one hundred twelve instances only thirty state that the light is Christ, and twenty instances of this thirty occur in iii. This suggests that Fox usually thinks of the light as *of* or *from* Christ, and that he tends to emphasize the extreme position that the light is Christ when he is driven to do so by his opponents attack upon the divineness of the light.

³³ *James* I:17. See vii, 58:40; vii, 67:31; vii, 71:44.

³⁴ *I John* I:5; *I Timothy* VI:16; *Psalms* CIV:2. In fact, I do not recall that he uses these verses at all.

³⁵ See Evelyn Underhill, *Mysticism, A Study in the Nature and Development of Man's Spiritual Consciousness* (New York, E. P. Dutton and Company, New Edition), which deals chiefly with Roman Catholic mystics. Especially see index under "Love."

ism.³⁶ Calvinism's insistence on the sovereignty of God and the complete vileness of man make the degree of intimacy implied in the use of erotic symbolism inappropriate. Fox, however, had done away with the Puritan insistence that a great gulf exists between God and man. For Fox the normal thing is for God and man to be indescribably near to one another. So Fox's lack of erotic symbolism is more a matter of Puritan taste and temperament than a necessary result of his viewpoint, while the Puritan lack of erotic symbolism is directly connected with the Calvinistic viewpoint.

The question of erotic symbolism is, however, a very minor detail. The important difference is between the comparative lack of emphasis upon love in Fox with the much greater emphasis upon love in the Catholic tradition, love being now considered in a non-erotic sense.³⁷ Fox is very fond of quoting the

³⁶ Note that Jacob Boehme, who has much in common with Fox but does not have his Puritan background, has a strong emphasis upon love and sometimes uses erotic symbolism. See *The Signature of All Things*, Chap. v, paragraph 11; Chap. vii, paragraphs 14, 23, 25-28, 66, 67; Chap. x, paragraphs 56, 63, 79; Chap. xi, paragraphs 4, 7, 9-17.

³⁷ There is a lack of emphasis on the connection between light and love in Fox's mysticism. One refuses to accept the light (which has ethical connotations) before conviction. At conviction one turns directly to live in the same light (in which is mystical unity). It is in social rather than in mystical terms that Fox characterizes that love toward God and one's neighbor which is one of the characteristics of a person living in the light. vii, 64:29-65:18. Love is not a mystical stepping-stone to light. Such Christian hymns as:

"Through love to light! O wonderful the way
That leads from darkness to the perfect day;

Through love to light! Through light, O God, to Thee,
Who art the Love of Love, th' eternal Light of light!"
are simply not Foxian in tone. (From the poem "Through Love to Light" by Richard Watson Gilder, quoted by permission of Houghton Mifflin Co.) On the other hand the Foxian God is never cruel and unloving as the Puritan God is in such descriptions of hell as that in *The Saint's Everlasting Rest*.

Gospel and First Epistle of *John* in connection with his ideas of light and the indwelling Christ, but he makes little reference to the verses on love in these two books. He teaches centrally that if a man turns to live in the light within, it will show him his sins and the glory of God in the face of Christ Jesus; it will bring him to do the will of God, and bring him into quietness, peace, unity with God and the saints, and eternal life in that which is above the changeable.³⁸ It is not chiefly in terms of mystical love that Fox goes about describing the spiritual life. The light within is simply never defined in terms approaching the light of the burning flame of divine love which we find in Catholic mysticism.³⁹ There are very few words with temperature connotations in Fox. Especially is it to be noticed that the light is not associated with heat by him. He uses coolness rather than warmth to describe the desirable reli-

³⁸ iii, 69:10-23; iii, 323:37-42; vii, 20:34-44; vii, 26:31-33; vii, 30:20-24; vii, 31:18-20; vii, 33:21-34; vii, 70:14-17; vii, 81:18-21; vii, 86:28-39; vii, 106:23-30; vii, 114:23-29; vii, 116:15-22.

³⁹ "The Primal Light that irradiates it all is received in it by as many modes as are the splendors with which It pairs Itself. Wherefore, since the affection follows upon the act that conceives, in this nature the sweetness of love diversely glows and warms. . . . O Light Eternal, that sole abidest in Thyself, sole understandest Thyself, and, by Thyself understood and understanding, lovest and smilest on Thyself! . . . the Love which moves the sun and the other stars." *The Divine Comedy of Dante Alighieri* translated by Charles Eliot Norton (New York, 1920), Paradise, pp. 230, 256, 257. See also Thomas à Kempis, *Of the Imitation of Christ*, Book iv, Chaps. iv, xi, xiii, xiv; and Vida D. Scudder (editor), *Saint Catherine of Siena as Seen in Her Letters* (London, 1927), pp. 81, 110, 111, 114, 137, 138; Evelyn Underhill, *Mysticism, A Study in the Nature and Development of Man's Spiritual Consciousness* (New York, E. P. Dutton and Company, new edition), pp. 92, 102, 148, 233, 234, 237, 243, 245, 266, 291, 294, 304, 318, 368, 420, 421, 504.

gious state.⁴⁰ If Fox is compared with St. Francis of Assisi in whom there is a great warmth and fervour of divine love, but love without much eroticism, it is easy to see how markedly Fox differs from the love emphasis of Catholic mysticism.⁴¹

⁴⁰ "... dwell in the cool, sweet, and holy power of the Lord God," vii, 128:32, 33. "... waite in ye patience & ye coole life," i, 322:31, 32. "... very coole & Loving," i, 370:19, 20. "... & what he receveth from ye lord he kepeth, & soe he sitteth still & coole & quiet in his owne spirit," i, 318:17-19. "... when he hath bene in ye world & amonge ye world ye heate is not yeat of him, for he may com in ye heate of his spirit out of ye world; now ye other is still & coole, soe his condition in yt is not to theres, he may rather doe ym hurt, begett ym out of ye coole state into ye heatinge state," i, 318:28-33. "... In yt waite which cheanes ym downe & cooles," i, 320:5, 6. The incident of the Cambridge scholars who saw Fox ride past and exclaimed, "... oh ... hee shines hee glisters," is interesting. Apparently the radiance the scholars saw had no warmth about it such as might have been expressed by the word glow. i, 190:27, 28.

⁴¹ Just the opposite to Fox, St. Francis of Assisi's radiance gave people the impression of warmth. St. Francis is typically described as being "fervent" in prayer and having "fervour of spirit." It is said that "Above all other creatures wanting reason, he loved the sun and fire with most affection." "Of the ardent love that glowed in Francis, ... who can avail to tell? He seemed utterly consumed, like unto a coal that is set on fire, by the flame of the love divine." And in the story of the imprinting of the Holy Stigmas the seraph had "six resplendent and flaming wings," "the whole mount of La Verna seemed to flame forth with dazzling splendour," and finally "this secret converse left in the heart of St. Francis a burning flame of divine love." *Little Flowers*, etc. (Everyman ed.), pp. 109, 114, 115, 294, 358.

Fire and light combine so easily in religious symbolism that it is strange that Fox does not make the combinations. We find it in such a Protestant as John Everard:

"He" (*i.e.* Christ) "is fire in three regards:

In regard of	{	Burning
		Heat
		Light. . . .

And all this is done by one and the same act in God, although those acts be *divers* and *distinct* in the creature; that is, the *same act in God*, which comes to the *obstinate* and *perverse*, and *hardens* them, it comes to the *humble* and *meek*, and *softens* them; the *same act in him hardens and softens*, as the *Sun doth wax and clay*." *Some Gospel-Treasures Opened* (London, 1653), pp. 4, 5.

The cleavage is not a superficial one. The Catholic church, in its difficulties with the Montanist movement, early came to dread and discourage the claim of individual Christians to direct revelation. The church recoiled from the vagaries of individualism and in defense of its heritage came to teach a reliance upon its priestly interpretations of its past revelation.⁴² However the Catholic church, as catholic, did not wish to crush entirely direct religious communion with God, and has always fostered that type of mysticism in which the devotee feels drawn, in love of the divinity of Christian revelation, to surrender himself wholly to God and to God's love and so to come to be joined to God.⁴³ This type of mysticism can be fostered until a very high degree of first-hand religious insight, experience, and inspiration is attained, and yet the personal relation of the individual to God will be kept to a large extent in an undoctinal sphere.⁴⁴ The Catholic mystics tend to psychological insight into relationship on the personal plane.⁴⁵ Love is a constant, far-reaching, and stable factor in human experience, and continues comparatively unchanged although doctrines may shift, and can on the other hand discover new heights of spiritual penetration on a practically unchanged doctrinal basis. This limitation of the sphere of mysticism has made possible the comparative success with which Catholicism combines highly individual-

⁴² Arthur Cushman McGiffert, *A History of Christian Thought* (New York, 1932), vol. i, Chap. ix.

⁴³ Evelyn Underhill, *Mysticism, A Study in the Nature and Development of Man's Spiritual Consciousness* (New York, E. P. Dutton and Company, New Edition), pp. 101-107.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 149-167.

⁴⁵ See for example St. Francis and Thomas à Kempis.

istic mysticism with a highly dogmatic theology, and with a highly authoritarian conception of the hierarchy.

The light plays a central part in Fox's mystical experience, and when he defines it as that which shows a man evil, he is ascribing to it a kind of intellectual content⁴⁶ which would be subversive to Catholic authority. From this point of view Fox is a Protestant mystic. Although his thought moves in the unphilosophical uncosmological sphere of the personal relation of men to God and to each other, in that sphere the experience of the light is not just a feeling. The light can be depended upon to show a man evil in general and also guide a man in his choices by constantly showing him the evil alternative which is to be avoided.⁴⁷ The light has become for Fox the rule of faith and practice⁴⁸ which the scriptures are to Puritanism and the church is to Catholicism.

The mystical experience thus becomes guide and authority for man, according to Fox. In one sense this is simply carrying into practice and to its logical conclusion the Reformation insight that there is no human intermediary between man and his creator. But the central developments of Protestantism, Calvinism and Lutheranism, feared too much reliance on individual inspiration, and so fostered extreme reliance on the Bible. Fox broke entirely with Puritan reliance upon the letter of scripture.

Fox's explanation of the worth and place of the Bible does not deny that all scripture is due to the

⁴⁶ iii, 283:15-30.

⁴⁷ i, 146:35-147:11; vii, 25:10-21.

⁴⁸ iii, 64:30-37; iii, 84:1-12; vii, 159:17-42.

divine light's inspiration of its writers.⁴⁹ The scriptures are therefore the *words* of God.⁵⁰ But as they are *words* they have become externalized, human, dissociated from the divine, not in the sense of being inaccurate, but in the sense of being disconnected with the divine power.⁵¹ The power is the word, the spirit, which speaks directly to human spirits.⁵² It is the light that lighteth every man.⁵³ As the light is never inconsistent, being always Christ, the individual inspiration will be found to be consistent with the revelation as reported in the Bible.⁵⁴ Calvinism had a theory by which individuals had enough direct inspiration to enable them to recognize the Bible to be the word of God, after which they were to be dependent upon the Bible as the sufficient rule of faith and practice.⁵⁵ With Fox, however, the direct inspiration continues throughout a man's whole life to hold the central authoritative place.⁵⁶ Fox read the scriptures himself and counselled reading them.⁵⁷ He declared that the light is not contrary to scripture but brings people to truly understand scrip-

⁴⁹ iii, 140:30-141:2; iii, 157:42, 43; iii, 178:12-22, 31-38; iii, 415:13-19; vii, 111:8-18.

⁵⁰ He refuses to call them "word," which term he reserves for Christ, *John* 1:1; iii, 97:27-29. This makes possible the identification of the word within with the light within. For example, "the word is nigh thee, in thy heart, and in thy mouth." See iii, 458:28-33, and *Romans* X:8.

⁵¹ i, 71:6-12; i, 298:30-35; iii, 178:12-22, 31-38; iii, 187:29-38; iii, 208:1-6; vii, 34:4-7.

⁵² iii, 222:19-26; iii, 388:37-389:13; iii, 449:3-9; iii, 458:8-18.

⁵³ i, 298:30-35.

⁵⁴ This is always assumed. See for example i, 70:31-71:5; i, 87:10-25; iii, 154:1-11; iii, 282:9-19.

⁵⁵ *Westminster Confession*, Chap. i; iii, 111:28-42.

⁵⁶ iii, 111:28-42.

⁵⁷ i, 69:13-19; iii, 144:3-11.

ture,⁵⁸ and brings people into unity with scripture.⁵⁹ This last is especially interesting. Fox claimed that all those living in the light are in unity with God, with the scripture, and with one another.⁶⁰ If there was disunity among Friends it was a sign that they were not living in the light.⁶¹ Had Fox used the unity test with regard to scripture, he would have had to admit that if a man differed from scripture he was not living in the light. This would have brought Fox into greater dependence upon the Calvinistic view of the scriptures than he was prepared to accept. But Fox makes a distinction. The unity of believers is a direct living spiritual unity, in the power, with one another and with God. It is powerful and immediate.⁶² So Fox can warn Friends to live in the unity.⁶³ But mere accord with the letter of the scripture is knowledge only, and out of the life: *knowledge about* never saves a man.⁶⁴ Thus to tell people to be in unity with the scripture would be to put the emphasis upon something external, and the externalizing of religion, out of the power, is antichrist.⁶⁵ Fox is thus able to claim that the scriptures are the words of God, and to assume that no

⁵⁸ iii, 282:9-19.

⁵⁹ iii, 63:37-43.

⁶⁰ i, 298:30-35; iii, 63:37-43; iii, 78:10-21; iii, 154:1-11; vii, 34:4-7; vii, 158:34-36. By unity with the scripture Fox means harmony with the scripture. The unity with the scripture is not the mystical unity of the Christian with the Spirit of God through which comes a mystical unity of the Christian with other Christians. See Chap. v and vii, 159:17-42.

⁶¹ i, 318:7-14; vii, 18:16-19; vii, 158:34-36; vii, 167:28-168:13.

⁶² i, 21:17-22:4; vii, 28:30-32; vii, 87:17-19; vii, 114:23-29; vii, 119:29-34; vii, 142:3-7; vii, 150:25-28; vii, 179:11-21.

⁶³ vii, 153:8, 9; vii, 155:21, 22; vii, 170:18; vii, 185:13-17.

⁶⁴ iii, 36:8-18; iii, 41:19-26; iii, 61:32-36; iii, 62:29-33; iii, 178:12-22, 31-38.

⁶⁵ iii, 152:6-14; iii, 234:18-26.

future revelation will be contrary to them, and at the same time he is able to put the light within as the ultimate authority.⁶⁶ He simply assumes that no one will have the difficulty of a revelation that is contrary to scripture. He says that what the Lord "opened" to him he afterward found to be agreeable to the scriptures.⁶⁷ He also speaks of having "great openings in the scriptures," that is, that in reading the scriptures he was shown their meaning by direct revelation.⁶⁸

This description of Fox's position in regard to scripture is typical of his whole tendency to keep near middle ground where it could be done without damaging his contention that direct inspiration is sufficient. He did not, as did some of the freer sects, consider himself above scripture. He considered himself to have the same kind of inspiration as those had who had given forth scripture.⁶⁹ And it should be noticed that he quoted scripture freely in defending his own positions. On the other hand Fox did not have the historical perspective that enabled Everard to say that many people discarded the scriptures assuming too readily that they were in St. Paul's condition, and not realizing that while they must not rest in the letter, neither must they cast it quite away.⁷⁰ Fox and the early Quakers were quite certain that they were in the apostles' state. Quakerism was a reformation, as Puritanism had been a reformation, attempting to bring back the church to

⁶⁶ iii, 63:37-43; iii, 107:1-7; iii, 154:1-11; iii, 179:22-24.

⁶⁷ *Stereotype Journal*, p. 73:40-43.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 65:9.

⁶⁹ iii, 76:40-77:4.

⁷⁰ John Everard, *Some Gospel-Treasures Opened* (London, 1653), pp. 329, 334.

apostolic Christianity.⁷¹ Puritanism had tried by means of the scriptures to find out what apostolic Christianity was like. Fox declared that apostolic Christianity was certainly not a slavish dependence upon scripture, because the pure early church existed by direct dependence upon the Spirit before the New Testament was written.⁷²

So Fox made individual inspiration the ultimate authority. There is nothing equivocal in his position on this fundamental point. This stand made it necessary for him to deal with the problem of human vagaries. There are dangers in a too naive confidence in personal inspiration.⁷³ Fox took the extreme position that the human medium does not in any way distort the divine revelation.⁷⁴ In other words he claimed to have found in the light the infallible authority for the church.⁷⁵ Of great practical value in moderating the excesses of individualism was the theory that the light is that which shows a man evil. The reason that the group Fox gathered proved to be a permanent one is, I believe, partly due to his skill in avoiding, by this definition, some of the dangers that would normally have followed the too exclusive reliance on direct revelation.

The claim that the light which is Christ is what shows a man evil steered Quakerism safely away from the theological pantheism and ethical anti-nomianism of the Ranters.⁷⁶ The pantheism of the Ranters had no theoretical reason for distinguishing

⁷¹ iii, 389:10-13; vii, 154:15-21.

⁷² iii, 91:22-31.

⁷³ iii, 76:14-26.

⁷⁴ iii, 38:4-12; iii, 40:26-41:5; iii, 62:20-28.

⁷⁵ iii, 76:14-26.

⁷⁶ i, 29:18-31; iii, 166:7-15.

the good from the bad, or for making a distinction between merely human impulses and divine inspiration.⁷⁷ Nor did it make any room for a theory of an individual's spiritual growth after conversion. The spiritual exaltation of Ranterism was a conscious realization of a state that had theoretically always existed, namely that God is all in all.⁷⁸ The Foxian emphasis on the ethical guidance of the light thus made possible spiritual growth, moral development, and the recognition that not all there is in man is divine.⁷⁹

The ethical definition further avoided by its very generality the other danger of making the divine revelation too specific. Thus in general the light showed men that they should keep the ten commandments and live righteously toward God and their neighbors;⁸⁰ it is what brings men out of war and strife into peace, unity, contentment,⁸¹ and a knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ Jesus.⁸² When Fox had directions or revelations of a specifically informational type he called them *movings* and *openings*.⁸³ Thus he was moved to tell Judge Fell and Colonel Benson "that before that day fortnight the long parliament should be broken up and the speaker plucked out of his chair,"⁸⁴ and the Lord

⁷⁷ Stereotype *Journal* (Philadelphia), p. 79:17-40.

⁷⁸ Jacob Bauthumley, *The Light and Dark Side of God* (London, 1650), quoted in Robert Barclay, *The Inner Life of the Religious Societies of the Commonwealth* (London, 1877), as an appendix to Chap. xvii, pp. iii, iv.

⁷⁹ vii, 37:41-38:2; vii, 174:24.

⁸⁰ i, 99:20-39; iii, 518:41-519:2.

⁸¹ vii, 20:39-42; vii, 81:15-21; vii, 97:30-41; vii, 114:23-29; vii, 133:42-134:8.

⁸² i, 144:6-16; iii, 304:25-27; vii, 25:21-28.

⁸³ i, 107:24-35; i, 266:33-37; i, 273:26-30.

⁸⁴ i, 107:24-35.

opened to him that being bred at Oxford was not enough to fit a man for the ministry.⁸⁵ Movings and openings could be expected to come to people dwelling in the light but he does not claim that the light gives him specific instructions as distinguished from universal principles.⁸⁶ Fox does not stop to theorize on his use of words. The distinction he makes here he seems to have made intuitively and without thinking through its implications. The distinction is not really a distinction at all from God's point of view, because it is the same God who lights every man that comes into the world who also moves and opens. In all three cases there is divine inspiration with an intellectual content. But from the human point of view there is a distinction in making the light refer to principles and the movings and openings refer to more specific things, and then in putting the greatest emphasis upon the light, because from the human point of view the light is the most stable and constant revelation.⁸⁷

In Fox's thought the one thing essential for salvation is faith in the light, which includes living in the light, which means turning toward the light and away from the evil which the light makes manifest.⁸⁸ Fox assumes as a matter of course that one who lives in the light will rather constantly have movings and openings,⁸⁹ but movings and openings are always thought of as the kind of experience that will nor-

⁸⁵ *Stereotype Journal* (Philadelphia), p. 60:37-39.

⁸⁶ i, 15:7-22; i, 17:1-21; i, 38:34-39:6; i, 40:22-27; i, 319:28-40; iii, 168:1-6; iii, 376:35-377:5.

⁸⁷ The underlying assumption of the constancy of the light is seen throughout the *Letters*.

⁸⁸ iii, 157:28-39; iii, 264:33-265:5.

⁸⁹ vii, 40:1-3.

mally follow living in the light rather than as something to be sought in themselves.⁹⁰ This does not mean that Fox minimizes movings and openings. He is not a rationalist but instead has a thoroughly supernatural view of revelation.⁹¹

As we look at the total picture of the spiritual life of Fox, with its light within and movings and openings, we see a belief in supernatural constant divine guidance in the details of life which is far removed from rationalism.⁹² And yet because Fox draws this practical distinction between the function of the light and that of movings and openings and puts the supreme emphasis on the light,⁹³ William Penn, who is far closer in temperament and theory to rationalism than is Fox, can consider Fox as his beloved teacher.⁹⁴ Penn's tendency to rationalism extends in fact so far that he spends much time in showing that the heathen philosophers of antiquity were inspired by the light.⁹⁵ Penn's *Fruits of Solitude*, it should also be noted, have something of the flavor of *The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin*.

The fact that Fox defined the light in general and ethical terms as he did and made faith in it and its revelation supremely important, helped make it possible for Quaker mysticism to be fostered by a group.⁹⁶ Because of this emphasis and definition Fox was able to stress the unity of those living in

⁹⁰ i, 112:39-113:10; vii, 106:14-22.

⁹¹ i, 273:17-30; iii, 51:36-52:8.

⁹² i, 273:17-30.

⁹³ vii, 40:1-3.

⁹⁴ Stereotype *Journal* (Philadelphia), Penn's Preface, p. xxvii:5-22.

⁹⁵ William Penn, *A Collection of the Works of William Penn* (London, 1726), vol. i, pp. 547-564. Compare iii, 103:45-104:10.

⁹⁶ iii, 48:36-41; iii, 51:36-52:8.

the light in a way that would not have been possible had his emphasis been upon movings and openings. This is because the revelation of the light is the revelation of fundamental principles.⁹⁷ The light is therefore the same in all. Those living in the light have different degrees of insight, but it is different degrees of the same insight according to Fox.⁹⁸ Movings do not have this universal quality. The movings people experience are not always identical because God has different duties for different people,⁹⁹ but the revelation the light makes is of a universal kind.

Enthusiastic movements which place great emphasis upon direct inspiration run the danger of being drawn away from spiritual truth by the spectacular. Fox's emphasis upon and definition of the light did enthusiastic religion in England a great service in this regard. He minimized the evidential importance of visions, foresight, and miracles.¹⁰⁰ Fox himself was instrumental in performing remarkable cures, and he was also capable of the uncanny insights of a definitely psychic personality, but he takes all these abnormalities as a matter of course. He associates them with movings, openings, and power of God rather than with the light.¹⁰¹ As foresights, visions, and miracles cannot be verified by being experienced in *unity*, they are of less importance than the light.

⁹⁷ iii, 168:1-6.

⁹⁸ iii, 62:20-28; iii, 84:1-12; iii, 338:21-26; iii, 437:4-7; vii, 22:35-23:8; vii, 115:4-25; vii, 143:5-10.

⁹⁹ i, 198:34-199:2; i, 319:28-40.

¹⁰⁰ There is no mention of any of these things in his letters through the year 1660. See also i, 180:36-181:28; i, 13:33-14:38; Stereotype *Journal* (Philadelphia), p. 59:29-35.

¹⁰¹ *Journal* (Cambridge, 1911), Index under "Fox, George, visions, foresight, remarkable cures."

In fact, sensory dreams and visions are held to be of less account for the very fact of their sensory character which seems to connect them more closely with the external things of the world and with that *mere knowledge about* that Fox felt to be so dangerous. The less spectacular but more constant and inward experience of the light was thought to carry greater assurance of its divine inspiration. Fox does not depend upon the fact that a group can perform miracles as proof of its divine inspiration. And this is in spite of the fact that Fox was both instrumental in bringing about remarkable cures himself and claimed the same for other Quakers. A miracle, according to Fox, is too external to be spiritual evidence. The emphasis on the light is an emphasis upon the eternal verities.¹⁰²

¹⁰² George Keith expresses in more carefully analyzed fashion what I believe to be essentially Fox's point of view on this subject:

"We do not hereby understand, any of these ways following, as of necessary continuance. 1. Not any audible voice, framed by the Lord immediately in the air, and presented to the outward ear. 2. Nor any outward visible appearance presented to the outward eye, neither by the ministry of angels, nor by the ministry of Christ, in the outward. 3. Nor dreams and visions upon the imagination in the night season, nor yet by trances so called, which is by a cessation of the exercise of all the outward senses. 4. Nor any outward miracles. . . . So that all these ways of God's appearing and revealing himself, in, by, or under outward appearances; or in dreams and night visions, were but very shadowy and remote, and rather mediate, than immediate: this alone appearance and revelation of God in his own Seed and birth in man, is the most near, and most immediate; and giveth unto man the most intuitive, and clear, and open and satisfactory knowledge of God, that he is capable of in his highest supernatural elevation; so that there is no knowledge nor enjoyment of God, that the creature can receive above the seed, nay not the angels and saints departed this world, only they have a fuller enjoyment, by very much, but not another in the kind of it, than what is received in the seed and birth of God." *Immediate Revelation Not Ceased* (1675), pp. 7, 17.

John Saltmarsh, a Seeker predecessor of Fox, held that truth is self-evidencing when it comes to the soul, and does not need miracles

The light as described by Fox makes the constant receiving of revelation the normal state of the regenerate man. The very constancy and unpretentiousness of the all important light was a stabilizing factor in early Quakerism. A moving or opening necessarily takes place at a particular moment of time. No one can live in a moving or opening. Such experiences, even if frequent, are intermittent. If authority is wholly placed in immediate revelation and that revelation is not constant, man will at times have the unhappy feeling of being left unguided. The capriciousness of the Calvinistic God in electing and reprobating men had been an important factor in making Fox turn from Calvinism. It was one of his fundamental confidences that God is not capricious.¹⁰³ As Fox defines the light it is a constant means of revelation. The "discerning" which "will grow" in one as he lives in the light is a constantly deepening insight into the eternal relationship of good and evil in connection with which one sees the glory of God in the face of Christ Jesus.¹⁰⁴ And this insight is a permanent experience.¹⁰⁵

to insure belief, but shines by its own light within. See Rufus M. Jones, *Mysticism and Democracy in the English Commonwealth* (Cambridge, Mass., 1932), p. 94. Although Fox was instrumental in some remarkable cures he never uses that fact as evidence of the truth of his teaching. Nor does he directly associate the healings with the light. Crowds did not gather to see him work wonders. His healings were incidental. See *Journal* (Cambridge, 1911), index under "Fox, George, remarkable cures." See also *Stereotype Journal* (Philadelphia), p. 59:29-35; iii, 34:34-35:2. See also William Sewel, *The History of the Rise, Increase, and Progress of the Christian People Called Quakers* (Philadelphia, Stereotype edition), vol. ii, pp. 259, 260. This is the account of Fox's and Penn's conference with Dr. Galenus Abraham, in 1677. See also i, 11:22-27; i, 22:39-23:19; i, 180:36-181:6, 23-28.

¹⁰³ iii, 323:37-42; iii, 528:33-529:6; vii, 166:30-34.

¹⁰⁴ iii, 48:27-35; iii, 304:15-33; vii, 19:14-18; vii, 24:23-30.

¹⁰⁵ iii, 283:15-30.

For this reason we find comparatively little of the periods of dryness in Fox. His pastoral letters to Quaker groups do not assume that the faithful will be subject to such periods.¹⁰⁸ The light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world does not change or vary.¹⁰⁷

Fox's definition of the light had another advantage which made it possible for his mysticism to appeal to a large group. The light which could be mystically felt and which brought a person into mystical unity offered an immediate way of action to any man who would turn to it.¹⁰⁸ The light showed moral evil. Evil is not, according to Fox, the material or the phenomenal.¹⁰⁹ Had it been so, Fox would probably have counselled a preparatory *via negativa* as Everard had done. Had Fox's type of spiritual experience been typically preceded by a prolonged negative effort to wean oneself away from material things, it is doubtful if the Quaker group would have numbered 30,000 to 40,000 by 1661.¹¹⁰ A movement has greater chances for wide popularity if it offers people immediate returns for the effort they expend. This Quakerism did. In the convert's first turning from his sins to the light he could experience the Divine which is end as well as means.

¹⁰⁶ vii, 74:7-12; i, 322:18-34. He never speaks of the light within him becoming dim. The periods of depression he undergoes he himself interprets as a kind of telepathic sensitiveness to the sins of others. i, 13:33-14:7; i, 20:27-37.

¹⁰⁷ i, 89:20-27; i, 94:18-30.

¹⁰⁸ i, 11:22-27; George Fox, *To All That Would Know the Way to the Kingdom* (Works, Philadelphia, 1831), vol. iv, p. 17:40-44.

¹⁰⁹ iii, 553:2, 3; George Fox, *To All That Would Know the Way to the Kingdom* (Works, Philadelphia, 1831), vol. iv, p. 20.

¹¹⁰ Wm. C. Braithwaite, *The Beginnings of Quakerism* (London, 1912), p. 512. This is only a rough estimate.

One other point should be made about the value of the unpretentiousness of Fox's definition of the light and that is that it actually leaves a large room for the exercise of the human intelligence. In this Fox builded better than he knew for he himself greatly distrusted merely human thinking and *knowledge about* in religious matters. Fox in his insistence on the immediacy of all necessary guidance insists that a person should not rely on the merely intellectual memory of past revelation. The light is a living and a constant guide.¹¹¹ The rigidity with which later Friends followed the customs of the 17th century golden age of Quakerism was not part of Fox's plan.¹¹² He himself lived spiritually in the present, not in the past. Now under these conditions there is a difference in the freedom allowed to the human intelligence implied in the belief that the light shows evil, from the amount of freedom implied in the belief that the light shows a man chiefly the good. For with Fox's highly supernatural interpretation of the light had he believed that it was chiefly that which *shows* a man good the probability is that he would have interpreted it to mean *tells* a man the good, that is, supernaturally puts specific ideas of the good into the man's head. He cannot interpret *shows* a man evil to mean supernaturally puts evil ideas into a man's head, because God cannot be thought of as inspiring to evil. Thus when he says the light shows a man evil the implication is that to the good and evil alternatives in a man's mind the light acts as a touchstone which points out and fences

¹¹¹ vii, 25:10-28.

¹¹² i, 74:7-37.

off the evil alternative.¹¹³ Thus Fox's theory, while it puts its confidence for the detailed guidance of life entirely in the supernatural, does not thereby rule out the human intelligence.¹¹⁴ The ideas are already in a man's mind and the function of the supernatural light is largely selective. The light is not conscience but it exercises the conscience toward God and man; and it is not reason but above reason, and it leads to true reason.¹¹⁵ In the case of movings and openings specific ideas are thought to be put into a man's head.¹¹⁶

The constancy of the light and its role of touchstone and guide to reason, which are consequences of its definition as that which shows a man evil, are important in considering Fox's relationship to Quietism. Fox has some resemblances to this type of mysticism, but he is not really a Quietist. Quietism demands a theory of a God who is normally wholly separated from the individual, who intrudes suddenly into the individual's life and who is best received when the individual puts himself entirely aside so that his mind becomes a blank piece of paper upon which the divine spirit can write. According to Fox the light with its ethical connotations is always present, it never has to be waited for.¹¹⁷ Al-

¹¹³ i, 337:37; iii, 242:36-243:2; iii, 404:13-16; vii, 26:38-40; vii, 74:7-12; vii, 143:2-10.

¹¹⁴ iii, 48:27-35.

¹¹⁵ i, 96:20-27; iii, 64:30-37; iii, 92:12-18; iii, 518:41-44; vii, 35:31-38; vii, 97:30-41.

¹¹⁶ i, 107:24-35; iii, 376:35-377:5.

¹¹⁷ " . . . for the first step of peace is to stand still in the light (which discovers things contrary to it) for power and strength to stand against that nature which the light discovers: here grace grows, here is God alone glorified and exalted. . . . " George Fox, *To All That Would Know the Way to the Kingdom* (Works, Philadelphia, 1831), vol. iv, p. 17:40-44.

though the great development of Quietism was within the Roman Catholic Church it is a type of mysticism congenial to the Calvinistic despair of the ability of human nature. Quietism became prominent in the last quarter of the 17th century, about a quarter of a century after the first period of Quakerism. Gradually at this time and later, Quaker mysticism became quietistic. This is thought to be partly due to the influence of Robert Barclay, who in trying to give Quakerism a systematic theology described it Calvinistically.¹¹⁸

It is Fox's insistence that all man-made worship is wrong,¹¹⁹ and that in worship a man should cease from his own thoughts and wait silently until he is moved by the spirit¹²⁰ that connect Fox with Quietism. But Fox's definition of the light keeps him from being really quietistic, because the divine light which shows a man evil is always in men. Thus the individual or group silence is not thought of by Fox as a stripping of the mind to a complete blank,¹²¹ because that would mean stripping away a consciousness of the light, and, as discussed previously, the experience of the light, which is to a certain extent a mystical feeling, is nevertheless also, because of its definition as that which shows evil, never wholly without intellectual content. Fox never says wait *for* the light, because all men have the light constantly available. He says to wait *in* the light to

¹¹⁸ Wm. C. Braithwaite, *The Second Period of Quakerism* (London, 1919). Introduction (by Rufus M. Jones), pp. xli, xlii.

¹¹⁹ i, 73:17-40; i, 335:22-39.

¹²⁰ i, 99:20-39; vii, 20:33-43; vii, 22:35-42; vii, 83:29-84:27; vii, 86:28-29; vii, 94:29-34; vii, 166:11-13.

¹²¹ i, 21:17-22:4; vii, 52:19-21; vii, 138:32-34; vii, 152:33-36; vii, 171:21-22.

receive the power,¹²² or to wait *in* the light to receive the Son of God.¹²³ The way Fox's thought carries the double conception of the divine always indwelling in man and the transcendent divine coming into man and upon man is nowhere seen more clearly than here.¹²⁴ The light which shows evil is morally pure and men are to wait in it for further inspiration. Since the light has intellectual connotations, such waiting does not leave the mind a complete blank; on the other hand, since the light is thought of as in man but not of man the waiting in the light is thought of as a ceasing from merely human activity.¹²⁵

¹²² i, 146:35-147:11; vii, 53:43-54:8; vii, 158:29-32.

¹²³ vii, 89:14-21; vii, 158:29-32.

¹²⁴ vii, 20:34-44; vii, 89:14-21; vii, 117:19-38.

¹²⁵ i, 318:21-34.

CHAPTER V

THE LIGHT IN WHICH IS UNITY

In the previous chapter we discussed Fox's primary working definition of the light as *that which shows a man evil*. In this chapter we shall discuss Fox's second centrally important definition of the light: that it is *that which brings into unity and in which is unity*.¹ These two definitions are valuable in that they gave the experimental enthusiastic religion a solid working basis broadly grounded in the nature of general human experience. This was essential because external authority had been discarded and the degeneracy of enthusiasm into Ranterism needed to be checked by the discovery of a stable norm in the nature of human experience itself.

Broadly speaking it can be said that the definition of the light as *that which shows a man evil* is used in Fox's thought to describe the light as means, and that the definition of the light as *that which brings into unity and in which is unity* is used in Fox's thought to describe the light as end.² Furthermore, it is possible to say that these two elements, namely his prophetic emphasis upon right-

¹ See Chap. iv, note 1.

² This is only a generalization. It is, of course, obvious that any man with Fox's prophetic passion for righteousness finds satisfaction in the very struggle for righteousness. vii, 25:10-27; vii, 74:7, 8. In the same way when once unity is thought to be the result of living in the light, unity becomes to a certain extent an objective test of whether or not people are living in the light, and so becomes to a certain extent a means of checking and guiding the human experience. i, 318:7-14; vii, 18:16-19; vii, 158:34-36; vii, 167:28-168:13.

eousness and his mystical emphasis upon unity are of parallel and equal importance in his thought. And finally it can be said that, very broadly speaking, the side of Fox's thought that defines the light as *that which shows a man evil* reflects his Puritan background, and that the side of his thought that conceives of the light as *that in which is unity* reflects that wave of mystical awareness that was reaching England from the Continent in the seventeenth century.

The conception of unity is closely connected with the ethical interest and emphasis of Fox. It is the same light that shows a man evil which, if lived in, will bring a man into unity with God and with other Christians.³ Obviously, if the light is but one, those living in the light, and avoiding what the light shows to be evil, will be in moral harmony.⁴ This idea is implied throughout Fox's whole conception of the light as *that which brings into unity*. But connected with this and yet in a sense other than this is his further belief that the unity which is a consequent of living in the light is something which brings a man out of the transitory and unstable into the permanent and secure. The feeling for the eternal and unchanging is, like the revelation of evil, something that is divinely revealed directly to the consciousness of man. "See, if ye do find something in your understandings made manifest, which is eternal, to guide your minds out of all external things, which wither away, and fade."⁵

³ vii, 33:1-40; vii, 150:25-151:12.

⁴ i, 97:31-98:14; vii, 18:7-20; vii, 25:9-27; vii, 87:15-19; vii, 150:25-151:12.

⁵ vii, 26:31-33; see also vii, 153:25-42.

Fox himself felt in a high degree this craving for the unchanging.⁶ And doubtless a large proportion of the earliest Quakers were also genuinely to a high degree sensitive to this *feeling* for the eternal, for Fox drew his adherents from mystically sensitive groups,⁷ and he writes to Quaker meetings concerning unity in such a way as to give the impression that he is reminding them of a type of experience which they already understand. It is Fox's *feeling* for unity and for the eternal and unchanging which classifies him with the mystics, as Royce has pointed out.⁸

Yet in spite of all Fox's emphasis upon unity, and upon feeling the unchanging, it is not in these terms that he makes his primary working definition of the light. Primarily, the light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world, which is sufficient to save men if they turn to it, is the light which shows a man evil. When Fox is directing an unconvinced person to the light, he directs him only to the light in its ethical aspect.⁹ He does not claim that the

⁶ vii, 26:3-5, 33; vii, 30:18, 19; vii, 57:16-18; vii, 86:29-31; vii, 87:13, 14; vii, 92:33-36; vii, 119:8-15.

⁷ As, for example, from the Seekers.

⁸ Josiah Royce, "George Fox as a Mystic," section III, *Harvard Theological Review*, Jan., 1913. It should be added that making Fox's classification as a mystic dependent upon his feeling for the eternal, or unity, or the unchanging depends upon one's definition of mysticism. If, as in this dissertation, mysticism is thought of in terms of the return of an individual to the source of his being, then Fox's classification as a mystic does depend upon his feeling of unity. If, however, one wishes to define mysticism as intuitive perception of religious truth, and so include the Hebrew prophets in the classification, Fox could also be classed as a mystic on the basis of his emphasis upon the direct perception of the light as that which shows a man evil.

⁹ There is a greater emphasis in the *Journal* on the light which shows a man evil than there is on the light in which is unity. In the *Journal* Fox is describing his labors among the unconverted. In the *Letters* he is speaking to Friends and there we find a comparatively greater emphasis on the light in which is unity. See Chap. iv, note 1.

unregenerate can feel any unity in the light. But when any man turns to live in and obey the light which shows him evil he will feel unity in the light.¹⁰ The experience of unity is the end rather than the means. Since God is righteous¹¹ only those who turn from evil as God shows it to them can feel unity with him.

The insistence that it is the light which shows a man evil that is the light in which is unity gives a discipline to Foxian mysticism that is lacking in Ranterism. The mystical exhilaration of Ranterism seems to have been based on the feeling of an indiscriminate athomeness in the creation. There is an illuminating incident of the Ranters who called for drink and tobacco, and one of them cried, "All is ours."¹² It suggests that the Ranters were more interested in religion as a means of getting personal liberty, than they were interested in personal liberty as a means of devoting themselves to God.¹³ Thus although Ranterism can be called mysticism it was a kind of spurious mysticism, because it seems to have been too self-centered to be permanently refreshing and invigorating. Fox speaks shrewdly of certain Ranters "that had been so loose in their lives that they began to be weary of it."¹⁴ Ranters do

¹⁰ iii, 127:11-15; vii, 33:1-40.

¹¹ i, 92:34-93:8; iii, 528:33-529:30; iii, 531:8-25; vii, 159:24-31.

¹² i, 165:10-31. There is an earlier similar incident in which a young man, this time presumably a Quaker, offers Fox a pipe of tobacco saying, "Come, all is ours." Fox says that he thought him a "forward bold lad" who had "a flashy empty notion of religion." i, 44:23-33 and note.

¹³ Compare Fox: "But the first nature, that would have liberty, must go into captivity; which they that live in their carnal reasoning, seek freedom for. But here is man deceived in his first birth." vii, 28:22-25.

¹⁴ i, 184:29, 30.

not seem to have been able to endure the spiritual discipline of silent meetings. Fox says they "took tobacco" at their meetings.¹⁵ With their self-centeredness and lack of discipline Ranterism represents a degenerate form of mysticism.¹⁶ Fox checks the tendency to Ranterism by his ethical emphasis. The difficulty with Ranterism was not that it was emotionalism, but that it was misdirected emotionalism. We shall see later in the chapter, in comparing Foxian mysticism with that of the *mystic way*, that it is possible for a God-centered mysticism to be primarily emotional rather than primarily ethical, and yet for the emotion itself to be a highly successful means of spiritually training and disciplining the devotee.

Although Fox's feeling of unity depends upon a right relation to the ethical aspect of the light, it does not follow that the feeling of unity with God is something intellectually dependent upon leading the good life. One does not turn from evil and then conclude by means of reasoning¹⁷ that he is in harmony with the good God. When the feeling of unity comes, it is as much a self-authenticating intuition as is the insight into moral evil, and like the insight into moral evil it is an ultimate experience.¹⁸ Because of this point of view, eternal life is for Fox something experienced upon earth by all the regenerate,¹⁹ instead of being, as in Calvinism, something conferred upon the redeemed after death.²⁰

¹⁵ i, 21:17-28.

¹⁶ Rufus M. Jones, *Studies in Mystical Religion* (London, 1909), pp. 467-477.

¹⁷ vii, 20:33-21:11.

¹⁸ iii, 233:16-26; iii, 286:36-287:3; iii, 437:4-7; vii, 137:16, 17.

¹⁹ iii, 93:33-39; vii, 137:11-24.

²⁰ *Westminster Confession*, Chaps. :

To understand what Fox meant by eternal life it is necessary to understand his craving for the unchanging, and the deep impression that the transitoriness of events made upon him. In the *Journal* is the well-known story of the call that came to him when he was eighteen years old, and that first sent him wandering up and down England seeking truth. According to Fox's account he had gone to a tavern for a drink at the suggestion of two young relatives of his, and while they were there one of the men had suggested that they should drink healths and the one who stopped first should pay the bill. Whereupon Fox left them. That evening in his room the word of the Lord came to him: "Thou seest how young people go together into vanity, and old people into the earth; thou must forsake all, young and old, keep out of all, and be as a stranger unto all."²¹ The omissions in this experience are remarkable. There seems to have been no fear of the evils of drunkenness or of the wrath of God. There was simply the overwhelming sense of the transitoriness of life. He expresses the same feeling often, especially in his early letters.²²

²¹ Stereotype *Journal* (Philadelphia), p. 56:29-32.

²² (1652) " . . . in the eternal unity in the one spirit, which draws off and weans you from all things, that are created and external (which fade and pass away), up to God, the fountain of life, . . . " vii, 26:3-5.

(1652) " . . . all external things, which wither away, and fade." vii, 26:33.

(1653) "And dwell in love and unity one with another, and know one another in the power of an endless life, which doth not change." vii, 30:18, 19.

(1653) " . . . and ye coming out of that which was in time, ye come up to God, who was before time was." vii, 57:16-18.

(1654) " . . . the Father of life, where there is no shadow nor changing. As ye come hither, ye must know a removing

Salvation involves a coming out of the changeable into the unchanging.²³ God is unchanging.²⁴ The light is unchanging.²⁵ Those who live in the light live in that which is unchanging.²⁶ The light within is also the divine life and the divine truth within.²⁷ Those who live in the light live in that which is eternal.²⁸

Fox is interested in the unity as something that affords man permanent security from the evils of disunity and change.²⁹ The unity is kept from being a oneness that transcends diversities by Fox's primary definition of the light as *that which shows a man evil*, which is part of his constant belief that God is a God of righteousness. We have already seen in the preceding chapter, how the definition of the light as *that which shows a man evil* ascribes to the revelation of the light an intellectual content, which really concedes doctrinal authority to the

and changing of that which will change, with that which doth not change. . . . " vii, 86:29-31.

(1654) " . . . to grow up in love, in virtue, and in immortality, in that which doth not fade. . . . " vii, 87:13, 14.

(1655) "So feel the seed, which is Christ in you all, and ye all will feel the Lamb of God . . . who gives to see, where there is no shadow, nor change, nor altering, nor variableness. . . . " vii, 92:33-36.

(1656) "So they have no peace nor rest in the old Adam in the fall, but in the second Adam, Christ, that never fell, are the rest, and the peace, and the life. But in Adam in the fall is neither rest, nor peace, nor life; but darkness, and trouble, and sorrow, and burdenings, and changings. . . . Therefore . . . haste to him that never fell, nor ever changed. . . . " vii, 119:8-15.

²³ iii, 323:37-42; vii, 33:17, 18; vii, 168:1-6.

²⁴ vii, 86:28-34.

²⁵ vii, 50:4, 5.

²⁶ vii, 62:24-34.

²⁷ vii, 125:2-26.

²⁸ iii, 158:27-30; vii, 33:22-28; vii, 64:39-43.

²⁹ vii, 26:3-5, 33; vii, 92:33-36; vii, 119:8-17; vii, 150:25-151:12.

light; and we have seen that this makes Fox's light within thus far a development in Protestant mysticism. We shall now see that the primary definition influences also Fox's other parallel emphasis, that of unity, so that Fox's experience of unity is, as experience, something rather different from the experience of unity in the type of love-mysticism in which the emphasis is placed upon the worshiper's craving for the union of his own being with that of God, the divine Source of his being.

We can sum up the difference by saying that the experience of unity is for Fox a mystical experience centrally involving intuitive moral discernment and the will, while for the other type of mysticism the experience of unity is a mystical experience centrally involving the emotions and the will. As a result, in contrast to mysticism involving chiefly the emotions and the will, there is in Foxian mysticism very little of the so-called periods of dryness,³⁰ no highly developed *mystic way*, and no emphasis upon feeling degrees of intimacy in the experience of unity.³¹

Emotional experiences, when they are of any great intensity, are normally intermittent, if for no other reason than that the exhausting nature of the experience itself demands a certain amount of rest and recuperation for the individual. Where the centrally desired experience is the emotional experience of loving and being loved the in-between periods of reaction will seem to the individual religiously barren. The mystic will feel himself not only exhausted but also bereft of divine guidance. Instead

³⁰ See the latter part of Chap. iv.

³¹ iii, 306:28-307:10; vii, 176:1-8.

of the happy moments when he seemed to himself to be responding easily to the slightest variation of divine influence, he will find himself under the necessity of guiding his life by a slow difficult exertion of his will power, in accordance with his memory of past inspiration, in the hope that if he is faithful it will at some time in the future be vouchsafed to him again.³² These in-between periods are usually called periods of dryness.

Fox's periods of reaction differ from the above description in a very interesting way. His mystical experience of unity centrally involves intuitive moral discernment. Now moral discernment is more closely related to intellectual discernment than is the emotional experience of love, and intellectual discernment once had is a permanent possession. Besides, the state of intellectual discernment is not as such emotional. I do not mean to imply that Fox's experience of unity in the light which shows a man evil was a purely intellectual affair. Fox was spiritually sensitive and his recognition of moral evil was much more intuitive than purely intellectual,³³ but intuitive moral discernment is not necessarily emotionally highly charged.³⁴ Definitely opposed to any emotional connotation of the light is Fox's insistence that the light does not change or vary.³⁵ He does not describe the light as becoming suddenly intense at any time. The Foxian light never overpowers anyone as the light did St. Paul

³² Evelyn Underhill, *Mysticism* (New York, New Edition, E. P. Dutton and Company), pp. 273, 274, 454-482.

³³ vii, 33:17, 18; vii, 159:24-31.

³⁴ On the other hand the experience of the light was not necessarily without emotional overtones for Fox could *feel* the light. i, 175:14-20.

³⁵ vii, 50:4, 5; vii, 62:24-34.

on the way to Damascus.³⁶ The earlier mentioned fact that Fox associates the light with coolness, as opposed to the association of the light with warmth (which we find in love mysticism),³⁷ is another argument for the non-emotional quality of the experience of the light. Furthermore, in his pastoral letters to Friends, Fox assumes that they will never need to depend for guidance upon mere knowledge of past revelation. He assumes that they will have the light constantly. And Fox's mystical unity is unity in the light. It is important that the spiritual experience which Fox made the authority for the church is continuously accessible to men and is not at the mercy of emotional fluctuations.

All this does not mean that Fox was not emotional. He was, like all great mystics, psychologically high strung, and he was subject to periods of great depression. But the important thing is that he emphasized and chose for his central authority that aspect of his total religious experience that was least subject to variation. He attributes his periods of depression to spiritual evils and divine visitations, which he seems to think of rather as coming into him from without than as being due to any lack within himself. And in describing these painful periods he does not say that he was forsaken by the light.³⁸

³⁶ *Saul's Errand to Damascus*, written by George Fox in collaboration with James Nayler and John Lawson, and printed in 1654, is concerned with religious persecution and makes no mention of the light that St. Paul saw on the road to Damascus.

³⁷ See the first part of Chap. iv.

³⁸ This dissertation is primarily a study of Fox's teaching during the period (1650-1660) after he had passed through his youthful uncertainties and had found his great message and his spiritual stride. Although the evil in other people's lives seems to have been a constant burden to Fox, I, 20:33-37, there is only one great period of depression

The mystic way of love-mysticism is a fluctuating progress in mystical experience. The term love-mysticism denotes the type of experience that results from the paradox of the contradictory desires of the mystic: he desires complete oneness with God, and he desires it because it seems to him the most desirable thing to attain. But the very fact that he is seeking it because it seems so personally desirable makes the human self so self-assertive as to make two centers of interest in his religious life, God and himself. This duality hinders the very oneness of extreme intimacy which he most desires. In the mystic way the worshiper tries to overcome this duality by ridding his love of pride or self-centeredness. The conquering of self usually involves a long and difficult struggle. The classical descriptions of this type of religious experience abound in subtle psychological analysis of the subterfuges of the ego. The periods of dryness just described are part of the fluctuations of this religious experience, and the struggle to overcome self-centeredness is part of the complicated and exhausting experience of love.

There does not seem to have been a highly developed mystic way in Fox's experience,³⁹ and we

during this decade. See i, 346:26-37. Fox's account of his earlier painful years does not as a whole contradict his teaching of the constancy and dependability of the light which shows a man evil. See, for example, the *Stereotype Journal*, pp. 59-61, 65. There is one possible exception to this theory. See the *Stereotype Journal*, p. 62:18-37. The famous illness of 1670, when Fox became temporarily blind and deaf, tends to substantiate the theory of the constancy of the light. See *The Cambridge Journal* (Cambridge, 1911), vol. ii, pp. 165-167.

³⁹ The painful period of Fox's youth was due to lack of knowledge rather than recalcitrant self will. *Stereotype Journal* (Philadelphia), pp. 61:28-36; 62:14; 64:20-31. These passages are the only ones in the account of Fox's life up to 1649 that suggest that Fox's spiritual life was a house divided against itself.

find in the pastoral letters, which are his most careful description of the spiritual life, none of the analysis into the subtleties of self-love that marks much Roman Catholic mysticism. He says that pride is out of the light and humility is in the light but his remarks on the subject are generalizations.⁴⁰ This lack of extreme insistence upon egotism is due to the fact that Fox feels no need to do away completely with religious dualism. Here again we are dealing with his parallel emphases. As a mystic he craves the feeling of unchanging unity with God. But he is also a prophet, and the prophetic type of religion is not so forced to try to root out all self to attain the right relationship to God, because prophetism sees in the ethical a common ground upon which man and God can meet together. In Fox's feeling of unity with God in the light which shows a man evil the mystical and the prophetic kiss each other.

In the mysticism of the mystic way there are degrees of intimacy in the feeling of unity, and bliss increases concomitantly with it. In Fox there is no difference in degree of unity. It is simply a matter of two alternatives based upon whether or not the direction of one's will is acceptable to God. One is either in the light in which is unity or one is out of it.⁴¹ This Foxian conception of unity is another factor in making Fox a Protestant rather than a Catholic mystic. The quickness with which a Foxian state of mystical unity can be attained by the convert, and the quickness with which a Foxian mystic can return to practical life in the world undoubtedly

⁴⁰ i, 98:6-10; vii, 142:6-16; vii, 153:8-17.

⁴¹ i, 27:6-9; iii, 306:28-43; iii, 556:20-32; vii, 176:1-8.

helped make for the wide popularity of his type of mysticism. Compared to the mysticism of the mystic way we can say that Fox was a mystic with an ethical short-cut to the unitive life.

The unity into which a man comes when he turns to live in the light is not thought of by Fox as a unifying of discordant elements within the human personality. Before regeneration the human nature as a totality is in opposition to the divine light which is in man but which is thought of as being entirely other than man. After regeneration the human nature as a totality is in harmonious relation to the light which brings about unity with God.

This unity with God is never the merging of the human and the divine, or never a swallowing up of the human in the divine, but instead the ultimate relationship is one of fellowship.⁴² But it is something more than fellowship in the sense in which we commonly use the word. The unity that is fellowship involves a new more intimate relation in being between the individual and God. God and man are now at one in such a sense that Fox can say, "As he is so are we in this present world."⁴³ This comes near to being a deification of man.

It seems to me that Fox comes the nearest to giving an explanation for this change in being in his theory of the soul, which always has human connotations but is so intimately connected with God as to be practically an emanation from God. The divine is supposed to be in man and of man but it is *in*

death before regeneration.⁴⁴ Thus this unity of man with God which is spoken of as fellowship, would seem to involve, or at least to have overtones of, a certain amount of identity of being of man with God. On the other hand the divine and the human never merge. Man's will is never identical with the divine will but only obedient to it or in harmony with it.⁴⁵ The saints constantly will to do the will of God.⁴⁶ But it is not impossible for the saints to go from the light within, out of the unity.⁴⁷ Around these conceptions Fox's ideas are shifting and blurred.

It is possible mystically to feel this unity with God in the light.⁴⁸ The feeling of unity includes the experience of quietness, peace, and changelessness.⁴⁹ Joy and love are not absent but they are secondary.⁵⁰ The practical fruits of the unity are gentleness, the moral life, the constant strengthening of the individual by God,⁵¹ and a predisposition to the constant state of receiving for guidance other direct intermittent revelations such as movings and openings.⁵²

⁴⁴ i, 74:40, 41; iii, 134:31-36; iii, 140:15-17; iii, 167:26-33; iii, 168:1-6; iii, 240:2-12; iii, 228:1-7; iii, 371:30-372:2. The reason I am not using Fox's more often used expression of a man's being *born a child of the light* is that the expression is too vague and general to use in explaining how anything is as it is. And the reason I am not using Fox's other often used expression about *the plant of the Lord growing in you* to explain the change in man's being is that there is a question as to whether the plant is the human becoming divine, or whether it is the divine growing within the human but not of it.

⁴⁵ iii, 69:10-23; iii, 454:32-40; vii, 152:14-20.

⁴⁶ vii, 102:3, 4.

⁴⁷ vii, 40:15-18; vii, 61:20-42.

⁴⁸ vii, 101:26-30; vii, 153:13-21, 36-42.

⁴⁹ iii, 309:7-17; iii, 446:29-40; vii, 101:12, 13, 28-30; vii, 153:8-43.

⁵⁰ iii, 425:1, 2; vii, 153:8-43.

⁵¹ vii, 21:1-5; vii, 38:28-43; vii, 40:13-15; vii, 44:42-45:5; vii, 46:2-8; vii, 50:11-22.

⁵² vii, 39:36-40:12; vii, 43:3-18.

These are the general subjective terms in which Fox describes the experience of living in the light of Christ, which is eternal life, in which is unity.

Fox's conception of unity with God includes as a corollary the unity of the saints with one another.⁵³ This unity is of a peculiar kind owing to the unresolved dualism of the merely human and the divine which is within man but not of man. Until the consequences in practical life of this peculiar conception have been discussed at length in the next chapter, the full meaning of what Fox meant by unity cannot be understood.

Fox seems to have been sensitive from his youth to the difficulty people have in overcoming the barriers of individuality and knowing one another in more than a superficial way.⁵⁴ The unity of the saints with one another, as Fox describes it, is not a unity or fellowship between human beings as such.⁵⁵ For human beings as human are in the changeable (what is human is earthly),⁵⁶ and it is not Fox's

⁵³ See Chap. iv, note 1.

⁵⁴ This insight does not seem to have been the result of unpopularity, for according to his *Journal* he seems to have been well liked in his youth, and really to have experienced the cold shoulder of the world only after he started preaching. He says of his childhood that when "boys and rude persons would laugh at me; I let them alone and went my way: but people had generally a love to me for my innocency and honesty." *Stereotype Journal* (Philadelphia), p. 56:12-14. In those early years it took a direct revelation from heaven to show him that "the lawyers were out of the equity." *Stereotype Journal* (Philadelphia), p. 69:50-51. Fox's mind seems to have been led from religious insight to a feeling of social isolation. In this his experience was the reverse of that of his contemporary, Winstanley, who experienced personally the social injustice of the world and was led by the experience to deeper religious insight. Lewis H. Berens, *The Digger Movement in the Days of the Commonwealth* (London, 1906), pp. 41-43.

⁵⁵ vii, 141:29-40. This is seen more clearly in Chap. vi.

⁵⁶ iii, 140:1.

desire to be united to the changeable.⁵⁷ Fox tells Friends that if they know one another in the merely human which changes, it differs them "little from the beasts of the field."⁵⁸ The unity he advocates is unity with one another *via* the divine light and seed which is the same in all.⁵⁹ It is by the unity of each with the divine that is common to all that they come to a mystical unity and genuine understanding of one another.⁶⁰ Fox writes that Friends are to dwell in the eternal light which never changes, and in it to know one another, and have unity with one another and with God.⁶¹

In the description of Fox's idea of unity we can see the nature, from the experiential point of view, of the life he considered completely satisfying. His idea of heaven after death is the everlasting prolongation of this kind of experience.⁶² Fox does not dwell at length upon the subject of the future life,⁶³ because his great teaching is that the blessed state

⁵⁷ vii, 33:14-20; vii, 86:6-19.

⁵⁸ vii, 141:33-43. This statement is another argument for believing that the divine within is other than man.

⁵⁹ vii, 31:26-31; vii, 74:24-75:24; vii, 116:15-22; vii, 153:13-21, 36-42.

⁶⁰ vii, 153:25-43.

⁶¹ vii, 34:22-24; vii, 50:1-13; vii, 51:30-33; vii, 53:28-32; vii, 54:1-4; vii, 58:1-17; vii, 61:22-40; vii, 73:33, 34; vii, 67:26-30; vii, 68:14-26.

⁶² vii, 116:15-22; vii, 148:5-12; vii, 153:36-42.

⁶³ "The journals of the early Friends contain comparatively few references to death. This fact is somewhat surprising in the writings of a seriously minded people living in an age obsessed with the idea of charnel houses, elegiac verse, and funeral sermons. Even in the testimonies, preceding the *Works* and autobiographies, little space is allotted to personal grief, and much emphasis is laid on the Christian activities of the deceased." Reprinted from Luella M. Wright, *The Literary Life of the Early Friends* (New York, 1932), p. 171, by permission of Columbia University Press.

can be experienced here and now.⁶⁴ In the experience of unity he knew immediately the state of permanent security, and it was unnecessary for him to encourage himself or his followers by looking forward to it in the future. Baxter, on the other hand, believed that the everlasting rest of the saints cannot be known on earth, because this life is chiefly a place of toil and pain,⁶⁵ and so it is not at all strange that he should describe the life after death in as great detail as he does, in as much as the thought of it was necessary for the comfort and encouragement of the faithful. Thus the difference in the amount of attention devoted to this subject in the writings of Baxter and Fox proves nothing as to their comparative assurance of its existence. Fox took his belief in a future life for granted, as is seen in his casual references to it.⁶⁶ His belief in a life after death is another example of his tendency toward conservatism in religious thinking. Fox held his extremely radical ideas as conservatively as possible. It seems that many of the Ranters had given up belief in immortality.⁶⁷

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In a way it is in line with Fox's ideas that he should believe in a future life of blessedness and hell, because of the element of unresolved dualism in his thought. Further, it is in harmony with what

⁶⁴ iii, 164:35-165:3; iii, 424:42-425:3; iii, 467:38-43.

⁶⁵ See Richard Baxter, *The Saint's Everlasting Rest* (*The Practical Works of the Rev. Richard Baxter*, London, 1830), vol. xxiii, pp. 177-191.

⁶⁶ i, 13:33-14:7; i, 199:28-39; vii, 45:34-39; vii, 56:12-20; vii, 148:5-12.

⁶⁷ Rufus M. Jones, *Studies in Mystical Religion* (London, 1909), pp. 468, 469.

we have called his Calvinistic overtones. And yet the belief in hell does not fit with entire consistency into his thought as we have been outlining it. Fox does not explain how, in the divine ordering of things, sinners can go to hell. He simply assumes that they do.⁶⁸ What I shall now do is to take that belief and make a relation of it to the rest of his thought. I believe it proper to do this in the case of Fox, partly because, as his interest was in the religious life and not in systematic theology, ideas of his may have an important connection with his viewpoint and yet not theoretically relate themselves very closely to that viewpoint. I also believe it is a valuable thing to do because, in the attempt to make a theoretical relationship of ideas which Fox himself does not make, the difficulties involved in making the relationship become obvious, and they help to explain why it is that the idea of hell is not emphasized by him more than it is.

Fox's belief that the regenerate experience heaven⁶⁹ on earth and that heaven after death is an everlasting prolongation of the state⁷⁰ would seem to demand as its corollary a belief that the reprobate experience hell on earth and that their hell after death is an everlasting prolongation of that state. Unfortunately for such a theory, human experience shows that many wicked people prosper and seem to be little troubled in their conscience, and that it is often the spiritually sensitive people who experience the wide range of spiritual satisfaction and tor-

⁶⁸ See the final paragraph in Fox's objections to various anti-Quaker books in the *Great Mystery*.

⁶⁹ iii, 183:10-17.

⁷⁰ vii, 116:15-22; vii, 148:5-12; vii, 153:36-42.

ment.⁷¹ Fox follows experience at the expense of theory and says that the saints know heaven and hell within them. He believes that those who have not known heaven and hell within themselves are in a dangerous situation.⁷² Thus while the future state of the regenerate is a continuation of their terrestrial blessedness, the hell of the reprobate would seem to have to be a sudden change of conscious state superimposed upon the damned by divine fiat. This would not be in accord with Fox's usual view of the spiritual life, according to which man has free will and God does not do violence to the human personality.⁷³

In discussing Fox's idea of hell it will be necessary to digress and discuss at some length Fox's idea of the devil, what I have called his *two seed theory*, and his idea of darkness. All of these have been mentioned before in the discussion of the nature of man and regeneration, but for purposes of simplicity they were not developed then. They are more nebulous than Fox's ideas of how man can turn to the light within himself and be saved, but they are important.

Fox's conception of the devil is less vivid than his conception of God but the degree to which anthropo-

⁷¹ *Stereotype Journal* (Philadelphia), p. 61:30-36.

⁷² iii, 183:10-17.

⁷³ Note that Fox tells Friends to obey movings. Movings are thought of as something men can obey or refuse to obey. In movings men are not manipulated like puppets. vii, 157:31-38. Furthermore, neither can hell, in Foxian terms, be thought of as a punishment for a series of previous wicked actions, because Fox does not think in terms of God's keeping score of good and bad deeds, but he thinks in terms of the total relationship of man to God at any given present moment. Baxter, on the other hand, can more easily think of hell as a punishment for past offenses. See *The Saint's Everlasting Rest* (*The Practical Works of the Rev. Richard Baxter*, London, 1850), vol. xxii, pp. 416:8-10; 421:12-24.

morphism is absent is about equal in the two conceptions. The evil spirit is called the devil, the serpent,⁷⁴ satan,⁷⁵ the earthly dark power,⁷⁶ the prince of the air,⁷⁷ the prince of darkness,⁷⁸ the spirit of the world,⁷⁹ and the god of the world.⁸⁰ Into the conception goes the picture of an angelic being who was created good and fell,⁸¹ the picture of a force of evil of a supra-terrestrial kind,⁸² the idea of the collective force of the sum total of the sin of mankind,⁸³ and the evil in individual men.⁸⁴ Fox's devil is too personal ever to be thought of as merely the sum total of all human evil. On the other hand Fox's devil is never one at whom a bottle of ink could be thrown.

Although the devil is thought of as a supra-terrestrial power who struggles against God, the dualism is not Manichaeism, because the devil, in as much as he is created, is not of the same status as God. There is no doubt about the creation being ultimately under God's control. Christ the light existed before the devil and darkness were, and will continue to

⁷⁴ iii, 268:41.

⁷⁵ iii, 446:16; vii, 55:43.

⁷⁶ vii, 31:31-33.

⁷⁷ vii, 56:38-42.

⁷⁸ vii, 165:18.

⁷⁹ vii, 70:7-14; vii, 86:7.

⁸⁰ vii, 147:27-37.

⁸¹ i, 185:7-18; iii, 102:9.

⁸² There comes immediately to mind the famous experience when Fox saw "that there was an ocean of darkness and death; but an infinite ocean of light and love, which flowed over the ocean of darkness." *Stereotype Journal* (Philadelphia), p. 65:25-27. This is not, however, typically Foxian of the 1650-1660 decade. It belongs to that early part of the *Journal* that I believe is not a contemporary record of Fox's ideas but a much more mature interpretation of his youth. See Preface, note.

⁸³ vii, 176:1-9.

⁸⁴ vii, 27:10-34.

exist when the devil and darkness have passed away.⁸⁵ Darkness and evil, or evil which is darkness, not being the eternal which is God, tends to be thought of as less permanent than God. Of the two, the devil would be the more subject to change.⁸⁶ This does not mean that there is anything unreal or ephemereal about darkness and the devil.⁸⁷ There is, as will be seen later, enough of the idea of lack of permanence in the devil, so that Fox's thought can sometimes play tentatively with the idea that hell itself will come to an end. But he never really puts this idea forward as a belief. He never resolves his dualism. Darkness is never swallowed up in light and all never returns to the One.

When Adam and Eve sinned the seed of the devil came to be sown in man.⁸⁸ This idea was not developed in discussing Fox's view of human nature and regeneration because usually he thinks in terms of the evil human nature and the seed of Christ. This other conception of the seed of the devil and the seed of Christ (what I have called for convenience the two seed theory) tends to make man the neutral battle ground between the powers of good and evil.

The seed of the devil which has been sown in man is apparently believed to be indwelling evil as being

⁸⁵ vii, 137:15-21; vii, 155:21-25.

⁸⁶ iii, 454:30-40; vii, 152:7-10. It will be remembered that Fox was so certain that only God is eternal, that he was forced to consider the human soul as an emanation from God in order to explain how man can ever attain eternal life, and then he was forced to describe the soul before regeneration as in death and so largely a stage property, in order to account for the need of individuals for salvation from sin and transiency.

⁸⁷ iii, 426:23-29; vii, 48:8-28.

⁸⁸ i, 142:22-31; iii, 553:20-33; vii, 17:28-36; vii, 154:14-16.

in much the same way that the seed of Christ is thought to be the indwelling Christ as being. When Fox is thinking in terms of the two seed theory he speaks of the seed of the devil (or the head of the serpent) as that which oppresses the seed of Christ in unregenerate man.⁸⁹ That is, the seed of Christ before regeneration is quiescent, the seed of the devil active.⁹⁰ When a man becomes regenerate the seed of Christ gets on top of the seed of the devil,⁹¹ (bruises the serpent's head),⁹² so the seed of the devil becomes quiescent or imprisoned and the seed of Christ becomes active.⁹³ Man's relation to the seed of Christ, which is the divine as being in man, is aided by the divine constantly made available to man as light.⁹⁴ In much the same fashion, but more lightly sketched, the power of the devil or darkness aids man's relation to the seed of the devil.⁹⁵

It was said previously⁹⁶ that Fox thinks of the indwelling Christ in terms which sometimes approach daemonic spirit possession. The same can be said of indwelling evil. On one occasion Fox says that if a man does not have the same Holy Ghost as the Apostles had he is an unclean ghost.⁹⁷ On another he silences opponents in argument by pointing out that all those who have not the power of God act by the power of the devil, for there are only two powers

⁸⁹ vii, 124:34-125:10.

⁹⁰ vii, 124:34-125:7.

⁹¹ vii, 103:2-10; vii, 126:3-11.

⁹² vii, 17:35; vii, 102:41.

⁹³ vii, 103:2-10; vii, 186:16-31.

⁹⁴ vii, 18:11-30; vii, 65:25-43.

⁹⁵ i, 254:37-41; iii, 63:3-6.

⁹⁶ In Chap. iii.

⁹⁷ i, 20:27-37; i, 34:5-26; i, 66:6-23; i, 66:29, 30; i, 147:38-148:2; i, 248:25-27; i, 256:19-23; i, 257:22-30; iii, 399:20-27.

and man must have one or the other.⁹⁸ In this connection it is also noteworthy that Fox, in common with his generation, believed in witches,⁹⁹ and on one occasion he speaks of a company of unclean spirits that came to him.¹⁰⁰

Although, according to Fox, a man after regeneration has Christ, and so has that which is perfect,¹⁰¹ the devil and darkness are never wholly out of the picture.¹⁰² In general the influence of the two seed theory helps to tone down Fox's complete assurance of the sinlessness of the saints. Fox's dualism stands out most clearly in the two seed theory. The one seed theory allows for the opposition to God of the inadequate evil human nature.¹⁰³ The two seed theory makes a place for a belief in a devil who is transcendent as well as indwelling.¹⁰⁴ Fox in his letters warns Friends to dwell in the light, and to keep their minds in the pure, out of earthly things, for in whatsoever their minds go out into and are addicted to, in that will the tempter come and try to get advantage over them.¹⁰⁵

Having picked up the threads of Fox's thought that refer specifically to the devil, we will now try to see what he thought of hell. Fox assumes as a matter of course the existence of hell and the fact that the

⁹⁸ i, 202:4-16; George Fox, *To All That Would Know the Way to the Kingdom* (Works, Philadelphia, 1831), vol. iv, p. 20:28-38.

⁹⁹ i, 110:7-17; i, 113:19-31.

¹⁰⁰ i, 346:26-37.

¹⁰¹ i, 2:25-37; iii, 128:18-32; iii, 206:22-37; iii, 305:16-30; iii, 413:9-36.

¹⁰² iii, 460:25-33; vii, 20:34-38; vii, 73:1.

¹⁰³ George Fox, *To All That Would Know the Way to the Kingdom* (Works, Philadelphia, 1831), vol. iv, p. 18:40.

¹⁰⁴ i, 342:36-343:2.

¹⁰⁵ vii, 20:33-21:11.

reprobate will go there. He tells his opponents that he is warning them for their souls' good, and that when they are in the fire they will be sorry that they did not listen to him while there was time.¹⁰⁶

Fox does not explain *how* people can go to hell, but an explanation could be given on the basis of the two seed theory. On this theory there are two seeds dwelling in man, that of Christ and that of the devil, and man has free ability to choose to come into permanent relationship with either one or the other.¹⁰⁷ Man could be thought of as continuing after death to exist in intimate relationship to which ever power he has, of his own free will, joined himself during his earthly life.¹⁰⁸ This would be thoroughly consistent with the idea expressed in *John* III:19, which verse Fox is very fond of quoting: "And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil."¹⁰⁹ Thus the man either continues in heaven with Christ, or he continues with the devil and goes to hell.

But it is the one seed theory that is more typically Foxian. According to this it is the evil human nature rather than the seed of the devil that oppresses Christ, the seed.¹¹⁰ Now the whole teaching of Fox points toward the idea that a man is under wrath not because of the sum total of evil deeds committed

¹⁰⁶ In the *Great Mystery* the final paragraphs in Fox's attacks on the various anti-Quaker books often contain this type of warning. iii, 426:10-25; vii, 48:8-28.

¹⁰⁷ i, 147:38-148:2; i, 202:4-16; i, 266:21-29; iii, 44:13-17; iii, 155:26-28; iii, 449:23-29; vii, 58:36-59:21; vii, 186:7-31.

¹⁰⁸ iii, 454:30-40.

¹⁰⁹ vii, 58:36-59:21.

¹¹⁰ iii, 46:32-38; vii, 28:22-29; vii, 66:9-15; vii, 127:26, 27.

in the past but because of the badness of his character at the present;¹¹¹ and it is the very fact that men reject the light and oppress the seed that is their basic sin.¹¹² When Fox is arguing for the universality of the light he points out that the reprobate have the light, because it is just their constant rejection of the light that is the state of reprobation,¹¹³ and he also points out that if you hate the light you have it.¹¹⁴ For Fox holds always that a man's relation to the divine takes place wholly within the man:¹¹⁵ not that it is only within men that God exists,¹¹⁶ but that men cannot have experience of God except within themselves; *i.e.*, one recognizes the light of Christ when it shines in the heart, one feels the power of God when it comes into or upon one. Thus it would seem to be necessary for Christ as the light and seed to be within men in hell if the men are to be wicked. On Calvinistic theory such a situation would not be necessary. The emphatic dualism of Calvinism, with its extreme emphasis upon the transcendence of God, makes it very possible for Calvinism to picture sinners in hell who are rebelling against God and at the same time are widely severed from him.¹¹⁷ With Fox, on the other hand, the God against whom man rebels must be within man.

But the idea of Christ within men in hell would be contrary to Fox's theory of election. For Fox

¹¹¹ i, 146:27-147:11; iii, 129:5-10; vii, 66:9-15.

¹¹² iii, 79:34-38; vii, 127:24-33.

¹¹³ i, 27:6-11; i, 294:20-27; i, 294:40-295:6; iii, 46:28-31; iii, 129:5-10; iii, 531:27-532:24; vii, 58:36-59:21; vii, 176:1-5.

¹¹⁴ vii, 59:1-6.

¹¹⁵ iii, 337:41-338:11.

¹¹⁶ iii, 353:24-28.

¹¹⁷ See *The Saint's Everlasting Rest (The Practical Works of the Rev. Richard Baxter, London, 1830)*, vol. xxii, pp. 371, 373, 376, 422.

says that the "seed" is the "elect,"¹¹⁸ that the "promise of God is to the seed,"¹¹⁹ and that the Lamb will have the victory.¹²⁰ Now if the light and seed which are Christ are eternally in sinners in hell, then Christ the light is eternally repulsed and Christ the seed eternally oppressed. Fox himself does not point out these difficulties into which his beliefs would lead him. He gives, as I have said, no theory of hell. But I have put the theory together to show that it is only with some effort that a belief in hell is fitted into his general view.

Fox himself is not without tentative suggestions that all men may finally be saved, and hell itself cease to exist. He says that "God wills that all men should be saved."¹²¹ Then, too, although he does not hesitate to tell his opponents that they are on their way to hell, he sometimes, instead, singles out those qualities of theirs of which he disapproves, and declares that those evil qualities are for hell.¹²² Again, Fox insists that God is the only thing that is eternal. Christ the light existed before death, and darkness, and the devil were, and will continue to exist when they are gone.¹²³ If, as this seems to imply, darkness and hell are subject to change, then hell is not an ultimate state. But Fox never does more than play with these ideas. The most that can be said is that their existence is sufficient to soften Fox's concep-

¹¹⁸ iii, 453:38-454:2.

¹¹⁹ iii, 508:24-37; vii, 137:11, 12.

¹²⁰ iii, 248:38-43.

¹²¹ iii, 212:19. This may simply mean that Fox believes, contrary to Calvinism, that God gives saving grace, the light, to all men. See also iii, 311:14-29.

¹²² i, 114:14-20.

¹²³ vii, 137:15-21; vii, 155:21-25.

tion of hell. The belief in hell, which Fox inherited, persists, for in spite of all Fox's emphasis upon unity his teaching carries the ethical emphasis as one of parallel importance. God, to turn to whose light is to come into unity, is a righteous God,¹²⁴ never a beloved Source of Existence transcending both good and evil.

¹²⁴ i, 92:34-93:8; iii, 311:14-29; iii, 528:33-529:30; iii, 531:8-25; vii, 159:24-31.

CHAPTER VI

PRACTICAL OUTWORKINGS

The practical peculiarities of the Foxian way of life were many of them gathered from the other small sects of the Commonwealth period,¹ but they are nevertheless closely co-ordinated with his central ideas. Of these customs, those of the insistence on sober clothes, the insistence on the *thee-thou* form of address, the objection to *hat honor*, and the objection to tithes connect themselves rather obviously with the definition of the light as that which shows evil, and less obviously, but just as significantly, with the definition of the light as that in which is unity. The customs of allowing women to preach, of silent meetings, of refusing oaths, of *speaking to conditions*, and of being opposed to violence (especially as this is seen in Fox's ideas about war and religious persecution), and of the special interpretation of marriage relate themselves even more closely to Fox's idea of unity.

Fox's insistence on sober clothes is due partly to his Puritan inheritance. It is also partly the result of his ethical emphasis: he realizes that if people gave the amount of money to the poor that they

¹ For example, there had been some disinclination to oaths and violence on the part of Baptists, and definite opposition on the part of Henry Niclaes, founder of the Family of Love. The Baptists had opposed tithes and had allowed women to preach, and the Seekers had had silent meetings. Rufus M. Jones, *Studies in Mystical Religion* (London, 1909), pp. 415, 418-423, 436, 437, 456.

spend on unnecessary finery, much suffering would be done away.² He also speaks contemptuously of fine fashions—one never reads of Paul and the other early preachers wearing “double cuffs, and boot-hose-tops, and ribands.”³ To mind such unnecessary things is to follow the vain fashions of the world which change,⁴ instead of minding what is eternal and changeless. Fox has no desire to be united to what is changeable.

The insistence on the *thee-thou* form of address and the objection to *hat honor* are attempts to stand against the evil of showing respect to persons.⁵ To use the plural form *you* in addressing a superior not only was showing respect to persons but also was an unapostolic form of address,⁶ and a compliment which violated simple honesty.⁷ To show respect to persons is wrong, because it is a catering to people's desire for honor, which desire is an indication of the self-will which is out of the unity.⁸

In the same way there are both ethical and mystical reasons for Fox's objection to tithes. Fox points out some of the abuses that creep into such a system of support for the clergy, and tells of clergymen who have sued poor parishioners for non-payment of a small tithe that they could ill afford to spare.⁹ He

² i, 286:17-33; iii, 71:22-72:16; vii, 140:8-12.

³ iii, 87:19-21, 31-36.

⁴ vii, 25:13, 14, 22, 23; vii, 121:1-6; vii, 168:19-32.

⁵ iii, 105:34-39; iii, 277:34-278:18.

⁶ iii, 149:15-18; iii, 205:17-32; iii, 368:16-24; iii, 389:27-390:17; iii, 407:3-17.

⁷ iii, 86:37-40; iii, 407:3-17.

⁸ i, 219:5-40. It is also unapostolic. iii, 105:35-38.

⁹ iii, 72:13-16; iii, 75:15-20; iii, 159:36-160:2; iii, 161:38-162:4; iii, 208:26-204:12; iii, 251:1-14; ii, 310:5-10; iii, 352:1-10; vii, 46:34-36; vii, 47:11-13; vii, 99:3-10.

also denounces in Old Testament fashion the priests who "preach for hire," and the prophets who "prophesy for money."¹⁰ But in addition to this Fox has here also a purely religious objection to tithes. He connects them with outward ceremonies¹¹ (as will be seen later he likewise so connects oaths) and he objects to outward ceremonies on principle.¹² Fox's dislike of ceremonies is no mere desire for simplification of worship, but something intimately connected with his idea of the relation of man to the indwelling changeless Christ. According to Fox, all valid religious teaching is by Christ, the teacher within,¹³ and all worship that is pleasing to God is exclusively spiritual:¹⁴ it is the human spirit's response to the divine when the human spirit is in vital unity with the indwelling Christ.¹⁵ Fox was very glad to stretch the convenient theory of the abrogation of the Jewish ceremonial law to cover items which the established church had preferred to keep.¹⁶ Fox's objection to the externalization of

¹⁰ vii, 46:32-43. Compare *Micah* III:11.

¹¹ vii, 84:18, 19.

¹² "All Friends, take heed of running on in a form, lest ye do lose the power; but keep in the power and seed of God, in which ye will live in the substance." vii, 166:11-13; compare vii, 80:39-40.

¹³ "And none act any thing in your own wills. But who act contrary to the light, and pay tithes, go to the changeable; and with the unchangeable are cast out from the children of light. And so the children of light are one in the light, and with the light see the body, and Christ Jesus the head, and are all one in him." vii, 84:17-22; compare vii, 83:8-23; vii, 36:20-31.

¹⁴ vii, 53:38-54:33.

¹⁵ vii, 81:40-43; vii, 101:28.

¹⁶ vii, 36:12-23. Fox and Puritanism both believed that the Bible is all divinely inspired. Puritanism explained Christianity's lack of observance of the Jewish ceremonial law on the ground that those ceremonies were acceptable to God formerly but had been abrogated by the incarnation. Fox took over this explanation. He declares that the old ceremonies were types, symbols, foreshadowings of Christ, but

religion is a matter of principle, not of degree.¹⁷ Tithes are an externalization because they involve an intellectually planned arrangement of religion at the expense of unity,¹⁸ i.e., at the expense of the moment by moment continuous response of the human spirit to the light, which is the living unity in which power comes.¹⁹

I believe that Fox's objection to oaths, like his objection to tithes, is closely bound up with his mystical idea of unity. Believing as Fox did that Christ's coming was intended to do away with the old priesthood and establish an entirely immediately guided

that when Christ the substance came the types and symbols were done away. This only partially harmonizes with Fox's general teaching because he taught that the Old Testament heroes were directly enlightened by Christ, which really means that they too had Christ the substance, and were not dependent upon faith in the future incarnation. Fox believed that the church of the early apostolic age had lived in the state of direct dependence upon the immediate guidance of the spirit of Christ, but he believed that even before the first generation had entirely passed away, people had begun to go from dependence upon the immediate guidance into dependence upon mere *knowledge about*. This had forced the true church into the wilderness where it had remained from the time of the Apostles until, in the formation of Quaker groups, it was being *gathered* out of the wilderness. The idea of the falling away of the church is not new in Fox. It is found in pre-Reformation Catholic writings that attempt to account for the growing abuses and increasing worldly interests of the church. The idea of the falling-away of the church was a presupposition of the entire Protestant Reformation. i, 28:18-35; i, 43:31-41; i, 56:34-57:11; iii, 63:37-43; iii, 150:28-32; iii, 237:39-238:13; iii, 324:3-330:20; vii, 74:32-37; vii, 127:12-14; vii, 154:18-24; D. Erich Seeberg, *Gottfried Arnold* (Meerane i. Sa. 1923), pp. 264-271, 284-286.

¹⁷ vii, 42:22-40; vii, 83:36-40.

¹⁸ iii, 75:10-15; iii, 95:35-44; iii, 387:8-388:16; vii, 42:22-40; vii, 84:17-21.

¹⁹ Fox says that if people live in the light it will show them that it is wrong to pay tithes. vii, 83:7-84:27. This shows how closely Fox's objection to tithes was connected with his central religious insights, for the light's revelation was to Fox the revelation of broad religious principles.

religion,²⁰ the record in *Matthew* of Christ's saying that in the olden time it was said that thou "shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths: But I say unto you, Swear not at all"²¹ is sufficient to account for Fox's classing swearing with the old abrogated ceremonial law.²² The argument that he usually brings to support his belief that men should not swear is simply this gospel statement.²³ Both Fox and his opponents believed the Bible to contain the words of God,²⁴ so this reason is the most effective direct argument he could have used.

If we leave Christ's command out of consideration, however, there is still a clear contradiction between the nature of oaths and the type of religion which Fox was trying to inculcate. There are two types of oaths, those that call God to witness that a statement of fact that a person makes concerning the past or present is true, and those that call God to witness that one will or will not act in a certain way in the future. The first type is superfluous on Foxian theory, for according to Fox everything a Christian does or says is to be done in the light, *i.e.*, in the presence of God and in accord with the guidance of God.²⁵ As a matter of fact Fox is not averse to trying to increase the impressiveness of statements made to non-Quakers by calling God to witness. There is a conspicuous example of this in a letter written by Fox to Oliver Cromwell in 1654. It begins:

²⁰ i, 28:18-35; i, 43:31-41; i, 56:34-57:11; iii, 324:3-330:20; vii, 74:32-37.

²¹ *Matthew* V:33, 34.

²² vii, 84:42-85:7.

²³ i, 151:1-15; i, 212:38-213:4; i, 256:30-40.

²⁴ iii, 63:37-43.

²⁵ iii, 205:41-206:10; vii, 87:29-88:3.

“I, who am of the world called George Fox, do deny the carrying or drawing of any carnal sword against any, or against thee, Oliver Cromwell, or any man. In the presence of the Lord God I declare it; God is my witness, by whom I am moved to give this forth for the truth’s sake. . . .”²⁶

The other type of oath, in which a man calls God as a witness in guaranteeing some future human action, is directly out of accord with Foxian principles. It will be noticed that the oath of allegiance, which is the point at which the question of swearing became an acute issue, belongs to the second type of oath. According to Fox’s theory a man should live moment by moment under direct divine guidance.²⁷ If a person religiously takes an oath that he will at a certain future time act in a certain way, he is really determining his future action by his present mind, and to that extent refusing for the future to submit himself to the living unity of continuous obedience to the continuous revelation of God. It is not that the act by which he would in the future fulfil the oath would be contrary to the will of God, for God does not change, and if in the present God desires anything he will not in the future demand the contrary. The thing that makes the oath wrong on Foxian theory is that it is a religious act which binds a man to act in the future according to the merely intellectual memory of a past inspiration, and to admit

²⁶ i, 161:14-18. The words, “God is my witness” and following were omitted in the Ellwood edition. I have modernized the spelling and punctuation.

²⁷ vii, 85:1-7; vii, 87:29-88:3.

that acting religiously on the authority of a mere remembrance of past inspiration is a valid religious principle.²⁸ Fox's own interpretation of his position is based chiefly on his idea of the abolished temple and ceremonial law combined with Christ's command in the Sermon on the Mount. But the reason that Fox gives for abolishing the temple and the ceremonial law is that Christ himself the immediate religion had come and all mediate forms were to be done away.²⁹

I believe that fundamentally Fox's objection to oaths is the same as his objection to taking the Scriptures as the final authority. The Scriptures are not the Word of God but only the words of God.³⁰ The Word is Christ.³¹ If the Bible were the Word then one could buy the Spirit with the letter of scripture.³²

²⁸ " . . . but that knowledge in the form without the life we deny. . . . " vii, 42:19-26. The way I have stated the argument is not the way Fox goes about stating it. But I think I have pointed out the religious principle that lies behind Fox's objection to oaths. The actual line of argument that Fox uses is the following. The Law and the Prophets foreshadowed Christ. In Old Testament times oaths were valid religious acts. iii, 298:10-12; iii, 299:36. Men took oaths to aid in ending strife and bringing about concord. iii, 278:30, 31; iii, 298:32-36. The oath was thus a typical and ceremonial foreshadowing of the peace of the mystical unity with Christ. iii, 298:33-42; iii, 300:34-42. But after Christ came Christians are in the peace of the mystical unity. iii, 298:40-42. " . . . but Christ, in whom is the peace, the covenant of peace, where souls come to be one, and hearts one, who are the true burthen; in him, are in the oath of God, the end of all oaths." iii, 278:32-34. Christ said that you had heard it said that you should perform unto the Lord your oaths, but he said not to swear at all. iii, 298:5-13. So now if Christians take oaths they go from the mystical unity, they go from Christ the substance, iii, 298:23-28, into the form that foreshadowed Christ, and so they do wrong. iii, 298:42-299:2.

²⁹ iii, 573:34-574:35; vii, 139:5-25.

³⁰ i, 256:24-41; iii, 279:21-280:28.

³¹ iii, 196:30-37; iii, 279:21-280:28.

³² i, 71:10-12. Or, as Judge Fell put it, one could carry the Spirit in one's pocket. i, 71:13-18.

It is true that the Scriptures were inspired, but they are only the record of inspiration, not the inspiration itself.³³ Thus the Scriptures are not powerful.³⁴ Mere knowledge of the Bible is therefore not religious, because everything religious has to do with a man's direct relation to the spirit of Christ within himself.³⁵ As a man lives in the light the Scriptures are *opened* to him by the spirit of God, and thus the Scriptures become useful.³⁶ But it is the divine opening not the text that is the religious authority.³⁷ To admit the final authority of the Bible or to admit the validity of oaths is to admit that something external is religiously binding. The oath is external at the time of its fulfilment, because at that time it is merely an intellectual assent to the fact of having made the oath in the past. The second type of oath would thus always be out of the unity.³⁸

It will be seen that Fox's objection to oaths is unconnected with his idea of the rightness or wrongness of the subject of any particular oath. It is not that Fox was careless about fulfilling secular contracts. He insists on strict ethical dealing in financial matters,³⁹ and Quakers became noted for their business integrity.⁴⁰ The light always showed people that they should act with integrity in their practical affairs: as God is righteous this is a necessary conse-

³³ iii, 279:21-280:28; vii, 169:17-22.

³⁴ iii, 279:21-280:28.

³⁵ iii, 152:6-14; iii, 337:41-338:11.

³⁶ i, 256:28, 29.

³⁷ i, 74:3-37; i, 256:24-41.

³⁸ iii, 278:31-37; iii, 386:41-387:3; iii, 560:18-24.

³⁹ i, 138:20-139:10; i, 193:32, 33; vii, 105:7-11; vii, 128:30, 31.

⁴⁰ See the "very honest Quaker" in the last pages of Daniel Defoe's *Fortunes and Misfortunes of the Famous Moll Flanders*. See Edith Philips *The Good Quaker in French Legend* (Philadelphia, 1932), especially pp. 74-78.

quence of their religion; but it is the individual's constant direct relation to the righteous God that is the religion itself.

The unity that an oath violates is not an ethical one. Theoretically an external religion and ethical precepts (there is a written record of the revealed will of God) would lead to harmonious relations between men. But Fox's unity of the saints with one another is not directly a harmonious ethical relation between men, but instead a living powerful relation of each saint to Christ,⁴¹ and in consequence a harmonious fellowship of each with the other by means of the relation of each to Christ who is one and the same in all.⁴² This, according to Fox, is the only real unity. Those who are out of this powerful unity are in the confusion.⁴³ No man-made unity is complete and enduring, because when men go out of the light and power, and try to make a satisfactory social relationship between men on the basis of externals, then self-will gets up⁴⁴ and harmony is impossible. The direct mystical relationship of men with God, and consequently of men with other saints, is the only real unity, and no permanent social harmony will be obtainable except one that is derivative from this mystical experience. Fox's idea of the brotherhood of man is something very different from the twentieth century social service ideal.

Any attempt at religion that considers externals authoritative is not a poorer type of religion, but a

⁴¹ vii, 153:36-42.

⁴² vii, 31:26-31; vii, 74:24-75:24; vii, 116:15-22; vii, 153:13-21, 36-42.

⁴³ vii, 101:9-13.

⁴⁴ vii, 35:4-6; vii, 75:6-10; vii, 77:43-78:6.

mistaking of non-religion for religion.⁴⁵ There had been no organized church after the days of the apostles, until the church, in the Quaker movement, began to be *gathered* out of the wilderness.⁴⁶ Fox could therefore make no compromise on the question of oaths, for an oath bound the future as an external religious authority, and an external religious authority, no matter how theoretically harmonious it might be with the divine will, was only theoretically harmonious; it was out of the living powerful unity and so was a setting up of the image of the beast, of the false prophet, of the harlot, of the anti-Christ in the place of the true Church.⁴⁷

In the silent meetings is to be found one of the most striking proofs that Fox does not think of unity as something that exists between the saints, but as a relation to God, which each having makes it possible for each to have a relation to the other.⁴⁸ The Quakers' knowing one another as human individuals is not spoken of as unity, but instead Fox says that they are to "know one another *in* the life."⁴⁹ Ye "who are in the power of God, ye are in the mystery of the fellowship. So mark, the fellowship is a mystery, and the mystery of the fellowship is everlasting."⁵⁰ In the "spirit live; and then ye will have peace, and rest, and fellowship with God, and one with another. For the unity is in the spirit, and it is the bond of peace."⁵¹

⁴⁵ iii, 104:11-18.

⁴⁶ iii, 150:28-32; iii, 237:39-238:13; vii, 127:12-14; vii, 154:18-24.

⁴⁷ iii, 205:41-206:10; vii, 42:22-40.

⁴⁸ vii, 106:23-30; vii, 115:13-15.

⁴⁹ vii, 107:11-18. The italics are mine.

⁵⁰ vii, 157:26-28.

⁵¹ vii, 157:39-158:2.

With Fox's inheritance of the Puritan conception of the sheep and the goats—the two great classifications of those who are and those who are not saved—the emphasis is upon the similarity in the common relationship to Christ of all those who are saved, rather than to individual variations.⁵² Thus with the dualism that Fox kept the emphasis was upon the unity of each of the saints with Christ who was the same—without change or variation—in all. Christ unmodified by the human medium,⁵³ the treasure in the earthen vessel,⁵⁴ acted in all the saints.⁵⁵ It is true that some saints were religiously more experienced than others,⁵⁶ but as far as Christ acted in any man he acted infallibly,⁵⁷ and Christ being self-consistent all those who were in Christ were in the unity.⁵⁸ Thus group mysticism was fostered.

It was the activity of Christ which was thought to guide the Quaker meetings. That is, it was not the consensus of opinion of spirits that had been sanctified, but Christ or the spirit itself.⁵⁹ It was the one and the same Christ who moved in different individuals. Thus decisions reached by Quaker meetings came to be based on the impression of the thing to which the spirit had moved the group.⁶⁰

⁵² iii, 589:19-25; vii, 101:7.

⁵³ i, 56:39-41; iii, 62:20-28; iii, 84:1-12; iii, 233:9, 10; iii, 445:8-17.

⁵⁴ vii, 123:7, 8.

⁵⁵ iii, 225:7, 8, 15, 16.

⁵⁶ vii, 23:1-6.

⁵⁷ iii, 76:14-26; iii, 237:38-238:13; vii, 154:14-24.

⁵⁸ vii, 77:43-78:6.

⁵⁹ vii, 175:18-176:10.

⁶⁰ " . . . the Yearly Meeting of Ministers that met in 1676 declared, in words which became incorporated in the discipline of the Society: The Power of God is the authority of men's and women's meetings and of all other meetings." "The position is clearly stated in answers returned by Yorkshire Quarterly Meeting to Pontefract Monthly Meeting in March, 1686: . . . *Answer*.—The decisive power

Fox's allowing women to preach depends also upon his mystical theory of unity, which is first of all a mystical relation of an individual to the indwelling Christ, and secondarily a consequent relation of individuals to each other. Fox was not primarily concerned with a theory of the social equality of the sexes. The relation of individuals to God was his chief concern. Fox allowed women to preach simply because he believed that Christ "was one in male and female."⁶¹ As a person turned to live in the

of ordering as well as judging and determining principally resteth in the Divine Spirit; and those persons gathered together as aforesaid, by the help and counsel thereof, may order, judge, and determine such matters as be within their cognizance and are regularly brought before them." Reprinted from Wm. C. Braithwaite, *The Second Period of Quakerism* (London, 1919), pp. 348, 279, by permission of the Macmillan Co. "My dear friends: Keep your meetings in the power of the Lord God, in which ye may all feel life eternal among you . . . in which life and power there is the perfect fellowship, that will stand forever . . . be faithful, who are gathered together in this life and power, and are met in it in it keep your meetings. . . ." vii, 153:25-40. "Friends: Meet together, waiting upon the Lord, that nothing but the life may reign among you. . . ." vii, 97:11, 12. "The power of God rules and orders people when there is no outward government." iii, 146:7-9.

In the type of mysticism that thinks of all people as on the same scale but in different degrees of nearness to God, the possibility of variations in degree of nearness to God are wide, and each man is really in a class by himself. Thus although the mystic feels a sense of brotherhood with all men because of the dependence of all the world upon God, the tendency of this type of mysticism, as mysticism, to individual as opposed to collective mysticism is great. This is in spite of the fact that Catholic mystics have often been members of highly organized religious orders. But this is due to the fact (as mentioned in Chap. iv) that Catholic mysticism is cultivated within an organized church, rather than being the thing upon which the church organization depends, and it is the church rather than the mysticism that is the cohesive factor as far as organization is concerned.

⁶¹ i, 153:5, 6. " . . . & I saide yt if ye power of God & ye seede spoake in man or woman Itt was Christ." i, 34:17, 18. " . . . for ye Lorde had saide unto mee: if yt I did but sett uppe one In ye same Spirit yt ye prophetts & Apostles was in yt gave foorth ye Scriptures hee or shee shoulde shake all ye cuntry in there profession ten miles about ym. And if they did owne God & Christ & his prophetts & Apostles: they must owne him or her." i, 39:33-38.

light he became one of the group of saints. Christ speaks in and through the saints unvitiated by the human medium.⁶² The saints are the people in whom Christ has risen out of death to rule and reign.⁶³ Since Fox assumes of course that women may be saints⁶⁴ (which is a necessary condition for salvation, in fact is the state of salvation), it follows that Christ may speak through women. Women preachers were listened to because their words were thought to be the words of Christ. That is, Fox's idea of spiritual life becomes at times spirit possession. People either have the holy ghost or they have an unclean ghost.⁶⁵ The dangers of extremes and of over self-assurance were neutralized by Fox's insistence that the light is that which shows a man evil and that strife and hastiness are out of the light.⁶⁶

Practically speaking, one of the most dangerous claims that Fox's enthusiasm made was that of being able to *speak to conditions*.⁶⁷ We have seen that, on the whole, his central definition of the light greatly lessened the dangers of Quakers' being drawn aside by the spectacular⁶⁸ or by over self-confidence. Here,

⁶² i, 56:39-41; iii, 62:20-28; iii, 84:1-12; iii, 233:9, 10; iii, 445:8-17; vii, 123:7, 8.

⁶³ vii, 103:2-10; vii, 126:3-11; vii, 28:26; vii, 102:26-33. The seed is oppressed before regeneration, it is in prison. vii, 124:34-125:10.

⁶⁴ vii, 34:41-44.

⁶⁵ i, 248:25-27; i, 257:28-30; i, 256:19-23.

⁶⁶ i, 318:7-14; iii, 491:23-32; vii, 97:30-38; vii, 101:1-13, 29; vii, 131:21-25.

⁶⁷ i, 20:27-37; i, 28:9-12; i, 50:10-12; i, 110:13-17; i, 113:19-40; i, 299:38-300:4; i, 317:24-37; i, 318:7-14; i, 342:36-343:2; vii, 68:36-42; vii, 83:42, 43; vii, 87:29, 30; vii, 92:38-93:2; vii, 96:35-42; vii, 98:9-15; vii, 100:18-20, 41, 42; vii, 105:7-11, 21-25; vii, 106:33-39; vii, 109:20-23; vii, 113:12-15, 22-28; vii, 115:13-15; vii, 132:1-12; vii, 137:27-36; vii, 138:32-34; vii, 155:6-8; vii, 158:34-39; vii, 168:1-6; vii, 187:2-4.

⁶⁸ iii, 37:19-24.

however, is a questionable claim that is closely connected with his theory of the light as that in which is unity. It is also bound up, as we shall see later, with his theory of *how* preaching is of value in the conversion of people. And this in turn is closely connected with his objection to religious persecution.

Speaking to conditions involves the claim of being able to recognize the spiritual condition of other men simply by looking at them.⁶⁹ Fox himself was remarkably sensitive and responsive to the spiritual state of others, and had he merely claimed that the religious state he was in heightened his ability to understand the spiritual state of others, the claim would call for little comment, but he made the claims for himself and for all the other saints (*i.e.*, Quakers), and he claimed infallibility of judgment.⁷⁰

Regeneration involves a man's free turning of his human nature to live in the light, and a subsequent release of a non-human divine that has hitherto been imprisoned in the man. After regeneration the human being is in a favorable relationship to the light and to this released divine, that is, he is in unity with it. But Christ or the divine within, is the same in all people.⁷¹ Thus if a man is in unity with Christ within himself he knows also the condition of Christ in others, for Christ is one and the same in all.⁷²

⁶⁹ i, 113:32-40; iii, 165:13-29; iii, 171:42-172:10.

⁷⁰ iii, 154:22-38; iii, 165:13-29; iii, 175:6-13; iii, 191:39-192:10. The obvious errors of Fox's judgment in regard to his spiritual estimation of others are the instances in which he claims to recognize that certain women are witches, and his denunciation of such men as Richard Baxter and John Bunyan. i, 110:14-17; i, 113:22-31; iii, 74; iii, 44.

⁷¹ vii, 28:26; vii, 102:26-33; vii, 103:2-10; vii, 124:34-125:10; vii, 126:8-11.

⁷² i, 20:32-37; i, 298:27-30; i, 299:38-300:4; vii, 83:42, 43.

This sensitiveness of Fox was so great that it seems to have had something of a spiritual telepathy about it.⁷³ Fox's remark that his spirit suffered with the seed of God in others, which seed had long lain "in bondage by the corruptions,"⁷⁴ is more than a figure of speech.

The actual speaking to conditions is the saint's spiritually aiding an unconverted individual on the basis of the relationship of identity of the divine within the saint with the imprisoned divine in the sinner.⁷⁵ (It should be said, parenthetically, that Fox's thought offers no explanation of *why* any man needs to be so aided, for the light "which lighteth every man that cometh into the world" is the divine made sufficiently available to each man, without the aid of other preaching or teaching. Fox knew from practical experience that preaching was valuable.) The simplest way of summarizing Fox's theory of preaching would be to say that when a saint preaches, the divine in the saint becomes to some extent available to the divine in the unconverted person.⁷⁶ This summary includes both preaching with words and the silent preaching of daily conduct. Friends are to preach in both ways.⁷⁷

⁷³ i, 20:28-38; i, 50:10-12; i, 327:24-328:11; i, 342:36-343:2.

⁷⁴ i, 299:39-300:4.

⁷⁵ "For dwelling in the light, ye will be manifest to the light in their consciences (though they hate it), who have the words declared from the light; such go empty away from God, who is light." vii, 98:9-11. (The statement that God is light is very rare. Usually it is Christ that is said to be light.)

⁷⁶ "And take heed of many words, but what reacheth to ye life, yt setles in ye life, yt which reacheth to ye life from ye life, receved from god, yt setles others in ye life. . . ." i, 317:24-26. "And be low and still in the life and power, and not hasty nor rash; that ye may in the life and power answer that of God in every one, that crieth for peace and rest." vii, 138:32-34.

⁷⁷ i, 319:32; vii, 68:12-33; vii, 98:4-15; vii, 100:6-20.

Fox is perfectly certain that mere verbal preaching, however accurate are the truths it may utter, will not aid in converting people.⁷⁸ This is because a discourse as a discourse is something intellectually prepared, and out of the power.⁷⁹ Such discourses Fox classes with ritual as externals.⁸⁰ Thus no training at Oxford or Cambridge is sufficient to fit a man for the ministry.⁸¹ The saints are the only people whose preaching has any value.⁸² For all people except the saints are out of the unity which is out of the light and out of the power.⁸³ When a saint preaches *that of God* in the saint, which is no longer imprisoned and oppressed but free to rule and reign, reaches to that of God in the unconverted person.⁸⁴ Fox describes situations in which there is a favorable spiritual response from unconverted people by saying simply that they were *reached*.⁸⁵

That of God in the saint does not always reach or convert the sinner.⁸⁶ If it did so automatically it would really be an efficacious grace which would do violence to the sinner's free will, and, as was discussed in the chapter on regeneration, Fox believes in the freedom of the human will. Besides, if that

⁷⁸ iii, 274:38-275:14; vii, 68:36-42.

⁷⁹ iii, 276:3-10.

⁸⁰ i, 96:34-41; vii, 90:5-25.

⁸¹ *Stereotype Journal* (Philadelphia), p. 58.

⁸² iii, 572:4-8; vii, 92:38-93:7.

⁸³ iii, 572:4-8; vii, 87:29, 30.

⁸⁴ "And ye next day from thence wee past to Marleborough where wee had a litle meetinge & Ed: Pyott went to a baptist teacher & hee reasoned with him: & as hee was reasoninge hee felt ye power of God reach Into ye man: & hee askt him whether hee did not feelee ye power of God reach unto him when hee spoake & hee confest Itt." i, 258:34-259:4.

⁸⁵ i, 28:9-12; i, 297:9.

⁸⁶ i, 168:26-29.

of God reached automatically there would be no way of explaining why it was that not all of the crowds who heard the Quaker message were convinced. The most that can be said is that when a sanctified preacher preaches, that of God in him, by some spiritual contagion depending upon the fact that Christ is the same in all people, to some extent becomes available to that of God in the unconverted person. Fox sometimes says that it *answers to that of God* in the other.⁸⁷ It should also be noted that when Fox describes occasions on which he preached he sometimes says that the power of the Lord came over them, and the *power* seems to have no relation to the preacher.⁸⁸ By whatever process *that of God* becomes available to the unconverted person, it becomes available within himself,⁸⁹ and he has freedom to turn to it within himself or to there reject it.⁹⁰ The rest of the account of the man's conversion follows the general scheme outlined previously in the second and third chapters.

It is not the words of the preacher that are thought of as converting, because spoken words, like written words, are external.⁹¹ But the sanctified preacher is in the power, life, unity which is immediate.⁹² The immediate reaches to the immediate.⁹³ When a man is reached he is conscious of the divine influence within himself,⁹⁴ and the conviction is sup-

⁸⁷ vii, 87:29, 30; vii, 92:38-93:2.

⁸⁸ i, 56:20, 21; i, 59:8-14; i, 152:10, 11; i, 182:25-31; i, 270:5, 6.

⁸⁹ vii, 115:14-16.

⁹⁰ iii, 166:7-15.

⁹¹ i, 20:27-37; i, 317:24-26.

⁹² iii, 312:1-10; vii, 87:29-38.

⁹³ i, 317:24-37; i, 322:18-29.

⁹⁴ i, 258:34-259:4.

posed to be due to the direct influence of God;⁹⁵ for the divine influence in the convert's heart is thought of as entirely divine, and not as the influence of the sanctified preacher. That is to say, the divine within the preacher is always thought of as something distinct from him.⁹⁶ It is something in which he can dwell, with which he can have unity, but although it is always available within him, he can at any time sever his connection with it, and go from the light, and go out of the unity.⁹⁷ The only reason why that of God in a sanctified minister is valuable in the conversion of people, while that of God in an unsanctified minister is not thus valuable, is simply that in the unsanctified minister that of God is oppressed and imprisoned, while in the sanctified one that of God is free to rule and reign.⁹⁸ In either case the divine is always the treasure in the earthen vessel,⁹⁹ something other than the human, unadulterated by the human being who is its temple.¹⁰⁰

Fox occasionally uses words that suggest greater participation of the human personality of the minister in the conversion of a sinner than the above analysis of Fox's belief would indicate.¹⁰¹ When Fox is referring to his disagreement with Nayler, he says that Nayler resisted "the power of God in me and the truth that was declared to him."¹⁰² In describing his own preaching he says, "I was sent

⁹⁵ i, 28:9-12; i, 318:7-14.

⁹⁶ i, 28:9-12; i, 258:34-259:4; vii, 68:36-42.

⁹⁷ i, 318:7-14; vii, 92:38-93:2.

⁹⁸ vii, 100:18-20; vii, 105:21-25; vii, 113:12-15; vii, 137:28-32.

⁹⁹ vii, 123:7, 8.

¹⁰⁰ i, 56:39-41; iii, 62:20-28; iii, 84:1-12; iii, 233:9, 10; iii, 445:8-17.

¹⁰¹ vii, 132:7-12.

¹⁰² i, 244:31-35.

'To turn people from darkness to the light.' ''¹⁰³ But such statements do not alter Fox's often reiterated idea that man can turn to or reject the immediate spirit of God within himself,¹⁰⁴ and that it is the immediate spirit of God within which, if not rejected, converts.¹⁰⁵ In describing the practical missionary activity of Friends, it would be difficult to avoid using sometimes expressions that suggest a greater amount of human participation in the conversion of others than Fox holds in theory. The sum and substance of Fox's mission as he describes it is to draw men away from all the world's teachers to Christ within them their true teacher.¹⁰⁶ The fact that a human being has to teach that human teachers are worthless involves a paradox which Fox apparently does not recognize.

With such a theory as that which Fox holds concerning the relation of one individual to the conversion of another, it is not strange that he does not believe in religious persecution.¹⁰⁷ In persecution there is an attempt to force a person by external means to uniformity with some creedal and ritual standard. The mere fact that the means are external places them out of the unity, and so out of the power which is immediate and in which all religion stands.¹⁰⁸ And even if force or persecution should succeed in reducing a whole nation to creedal and ritual uniformity, nothing would be gained. For

¹⁰³ vii, 9:20, 21.

¹⁰⁴ vii, 98:9-11; vii, 176:1-5.

¹⁰⁵ i, 294:20-27; i, 294:40-295:6; iii, 46:28-31; iii, 79:34-38; iii, 129:5-10.

¹⁰⁶ i, 72-75.

¹⁰⁷ iii, 182:17-27.

¹⁰⁸ iii, 104:11-18.

uniformity of manners or of reasoned beliefs is not unity at all according to Fox.¹⁰⁹ It is that falling away into externals and mere reasoning, which is out of the power and so is anti-Christ.¹¹⁰ There is no real unity between merely human natures.¹¹¹ It would follow that even should the creed and ritual which men had first accepted under compulsion, later come to be accepted gladly, they would still be valueless and even pernicious, because they would still be completely out of the power.¹¹² That is to say, no sum of accurate beliefs intellectually held ever saves a man.¹¹³ A man is only saved by turning to, living in, and so coming into a constant satisfactory relationship with the living power of God, which God makes available to the man within himself.¹¹⁴ It is in living unity with the power, the seed, with Christ, who is eternal and without beginning or ending, that man has life, for Christ is that life. No correct knowledge about it is of any avail. The only place where man can come into unity, *i.e.* into right relationship with Christ, is within himself. We have seen how according to Fox's theory a sanctified minister, one who is in the unity, can be of assistance in the conversion of others. It is not the sanctified human nature of the minister that is useful, but the divine power which is in the minister and which now has free play.¹¹⁵ A man who is sanctified, who is in the light, is in the experience of unity, quietness, gentle-

¹⁰⁹ iii, 286:31-287:15.

¹¹⁰ iii, 286:31-287:15; iii, 574:20-35.

¹¹¹ i, 317:24-37; vii, 141:29-40.

¹¹² vii, 90:1-6.

¹¹³ iii, 136:39-137:2; vii, 90:5, 6.

¹¹⁴ iii, 514:22-26; iii, 518:21-40; vii, 96:39-43.

¹¹⁵ i, 318:7-14.

ness, peace, lack of hastiness, is in that which all unrighteousness, and jangling and disunity are out of.¹¹⁶ But the unity is with Christ and Christ is the same in all, and so cannot inspire two people contradictorily. If Christ inspired one person to persecute, the complementary inspiration would have to be to desire to be persecuted,¹¹⁷ for all disunity is out of the light.¹¹⁸ A religious persecutor is *ipso facto* out of the light, oppressing and imprisoning that of God in himself;¹¹⁹ and so, no matter how correct his religious formulae may be,¹²⁰ he himself can be of no service whatever in making that of God more available to others.

And, from another point of view, if a man is regenerate and does have the light and power, he is unable to force them upon others because they are something that he obeys not something that he is master of.¹²¹ To suggest that the power and light could be forced by one man upon another is to suggest that the power and light be quiescent. But that is unthinkable for that would make God subject to man instead of man's being subject to God.¹²² And the power of God and the minister cannot join forces to coerce the other man for two reasons. The first is that if the minister were merely being the servant of

¹¹⁶ iii, 446:33-37; iii, 491:23-32; vii, 44:42-45:5; vii, 153:8-43; vii, 101:12, 13, 28-30; vii, 20:42-21:5.

¹¹⁷ This follows from Fox's fundamental ideas. vii, 138:9-16. Fox assumes, for example, that the light will always reveal as it revealed to the Apostles. Fox calls the Golden Rule the royal law of Christ. i, 193:15, 16.

¹¹⁸ iii, 446:33-36; vii, 87:29-37; vii, 138:9-16.

¹¹⁹ i, 318:7-14; vii, 100:18-20.

¹²⁰ iii, 136:39-137:2.

¹²¹ iii, 111:31-37.

¹²² This is implied in i, 96:34-97:10; i, 318:7-14.

the light and power, and the light and power were taking the lead, then the divine spirit would be doing the influencing, and that would put the preacher in the position of the minister described previously in speaking of the way in which Fox thinks of preaching as helpful in convincing men. If the light and power did the influencing there could be no coercion against the conscience of the second man, because the light and power would not be in contact with the second man *until* they were recognized by his conscience as the light and power of God. For the place where the spiritual-human transactions occur is in the conscience.¹²³

The second reason is that where the spirit leads it never persecutes or gains its ends by violence, because it has no violence to use.¹²⁴ Violence involves external force and the spirit acts not externally but in the conscience. And man's actions cannot supply the force that the spirit as such lacks, because man's actions can only be actions for the divine, they can never become the actions of the divine. Fox never blurs the distinction between the divine and the human, and there is no religion outside of a man's immediate relation to the spirit.¹²⁵ As was said in the second and third chapters, in spite of Fox's goal tending to be a deification of man, and in spite of Fox's saying that Christ is in man, the divine never ceases, even after regeneration, to be thought of as other than the human being. Fox never wholly transcends the dualism that he inherited, and this dualism

¹²³ iii, 49:34-40; iii, 127:11-15.

¹²⁴ i, 96:34-97:10; i, 161:32-41; i, 318:7-14; i, 319:17-26; vii, 20:14-18; vii, 138:9-16; vii, 160:33-40.

¹²⁵ iii, 337:41-338:11; vii, 42:22-40; vii, 163:1-164:8.

becomes, at this point, a bulwark for religious freedom against religious persecution.

The specific objection to violence which is Fox's objection to war shows clearly that his chief objection to war is that it is out of the unity.¹²⁶ There is comparatively little shrinking at the suffering caused by battles, although as a humane man he would regret that.¹²⁷ In Fox's account of his wanderings up and down England in the 1640s, he says that when he was a young man some of his acquaintance would have had him join the auxiliary band among the soldiery, but he refused, and was grieved that they offered such things to him, being a tender youth.¹²⁸ This is the only passage in the description of that decade that suggests that England was in a state of military unrest. A person does not get a picture of the military situation from the *Journal*. Instead of being greatly concerned by the horrors of war during this period, Fox is going to fairs and telling people not to be vain and deceitful, and telling masters to be kind to their servants, and telling servants to work honestly and loyally for their masters, and exhorting mistresses and teachers to bring up their servants and children in the fear of the Lord.¹²⁹

The *Journal* shows us a background of social unrest but not of war. The outstanding incident connecting Fox with the fighting of the civil wars is that in which some soldiers come and want him to join the Commonwealth army and be their captain. He expresses his position when he refuses them, by saying

¹²⁶ i, 318:7-14; iii, 446:30-39; vii, 18:16-20; vii, 101:1-13; vii, 114:10, 11; vii, 138:11-16; vii, 163:4-10.

¹²⁷ vii, 50:14-18; vii, 70:24-42.

¹²⁸ *Stereotype Journal* (Philadelphia), p. 57:16-19.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 75:26-48.

that he is in that which takes away the occasion for war.¹³⁰

War is incompatible with his idea of unity. When Fox writes to groups of Friends he warns them to meet together, and know one another in the light which is one, which will lead them out of all bickerings, contentions, and strife, which are out of the light and unity.¹³¹ The reason is not far to seek. According to Fox the saints are to be guided constantly in their actions by Christ the light who is in them.¹³² There is no inconsistency or confusion whatever in Christ.¹³³ As war is the most glaring example of disunity¹³⁴ it is obviously impossible to wage war while living in the direct guidance of Christ. But only those who live in Christ, which means in the direct counsel of Christ, have eternal life, for Christ is the eternal life.¹³⁵ Eternal life is in Christ the light in which is unity.¹³⁶

¹³⁰ i, 11:28-12:9.

¹³¹ iii, 157:29-39; vii, 64:30-36; vii, 81:15-21; vii, 90:14-22.

¹³² vii, 101:12, 13; vii, 124:18-23.

¹³³ iii, 290:1-4; iii, 446:35-37; vii, 18:16-20; vii, 101:1-13; vii, 114:10, 11.

¹³⁴ vii, 84:39-42; vii, 118:21-44; vii, 145:9-14.

¹³⁵ iii, 40:37-41:5; iii, 45:1-6; iii, 61:18-24; iii, 62:34-37; iii, 63:7-15; iii, 93:27-32; vii, 127:12-42; vii, 128:5-26; vii, 134:5-8; vii, 137:39-42; vii, 138:1-16.

¹³⁶ In spite of Fox's stand for non-violence which is a consequence of his theory of unity, he does not rail at the civil magistrate's use of force. i, 161:21-30. Fox disapproves of capital punishment for small offenses, i, 13:33-14:7, but he insists that the magistrate is to be a terror to evil doers, and that he bears not the sword in vain. vii, 178:6-9. This is a concession to the unregenerate condition of society. vii, 178:5-15. As to Fox's own arrests and imprisonments, beyond preaching that governments should not persecute for differences in religious belief, vii, 163:1-164:8, his denunciations are chiefly for such things as the unsanitary and immoral conditions of prisons, i, 125:23-34; i, 227:9-37, and the unnecessary cruelty toward prisoners on the part of jailers and the officers who arrested him. i, 126:1-38; i, 209:4-36. Fox does not say that bodily constraint for offenders against the civil law is wrong. i, 193:3-10; i, 194:5-11; iii, 589:12-15.

That Fox's mysticism encouraged marriage is due both to the fact that his mystical unity was much nearer to fellowship than to identity with the divine,¹³⁷ and to the fact that his mysticism did not consider matter as such to be evil,¹³⁸ but in more Hebraic fashion thought of evil in ethical-social terms.¹³⁹ Puritanism held that the marriage relationship is not sinful because it is ordained of God, but the marriage relationship had at best a permissive place in the Puritan ethic.¹⁴⁰ Fox's counsels in the matter of marriage have all the sobriety characteristic of the Puritan temperament.¹⁴¹ But his conception of heaven on earth, including as it does the mystical unity of the saints with one another through the mystical unity of each with Christ, is in line with the ascription of a more positive dignity to marriage.¹⁴²

On the other hand, Fox's theory of unity, while it dignifies marriage, allows only for marriage in the light. That is, the marriage relationship on its spiritual side is not primarily a relation between mere individuals, but the mystical unity of each partner with the other through the mystical unity of each with Christ within.¹⁴³ Those who lived in the light were those who constituted the Quaker group. There could thus be no spiritual unity where one party to the marriage was a non-Quaker. Any such marriage

¹³⁷ vii, 152:14-20; vii, 187:35-37.

¹³⁸ i, 136:16-23.

¹³⁹ vii, 41:13-16. George Fox, *To All That Would Know the Way to the Kingdom* (*Works*, Philadelphia, 1831), vol. iv, pp. 20, 21.

¹⁴⁰ John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (Edinb., 1845), vol i, book ii, chap. viii, paragraphs 41-44.

¹⁴¹ vii, 79:40-80:6.

¹⁴² vii, 79:24-26; vii, 80:9-13.

¹⁴³ i, 297:23-27; vii, 34:22-28.

was a going out of the unity in which the Quaker fellowship stood.¹⁴⁴ In Quakerism the practice of excommunicating the Quaker member of a mixed marriage continued until 1859.¹⁴⁵ The Quaker theory of unity thus fostered a practical exclusiveness that is a strange contrast to Fox's great central message of the universal availability of the saving light.

¹⁴⁴i, 201:1-13; iii, 407:18-25; vii, 47:30-41; vii, 164:26-40; vii, 180:1-181:21.

¹⁴⁵Rufus M. Jones, *The Later Periods of Quakerism* (London, 1921), pp. 415, 429, 949-951.

CHAPTER VII

THE GLORY OF GOD IN THE FACE OF CHRIST JESUS¹

The theory that has been outlined, the light as that which shows a man evil and the light as that in which is unity, does not really take into account the Christian revelation. Fox's central position can be held without reference to historical Christianity. His theory that the universal saving light within is the only teacher and authority is too general to be specifically Christian. There is no logical need for the incarnation and the passion in Fox's central religious conceptions. When Fox talks about Christ's dying for us² and redeeming us,³ he is simply using inherited terminology without co-ordinating it with his other thought.

The outstanding illustration of his difficulty in relating his religion to traditional Christianity is his definition of the cross of Christ. He says that the cross of Christ is within.⁴ (This does not mean that he does not believe that the historical Jesus died on a cross outside of Jerusalem.)⁵ Fox's definition of the cross within seems almost to be a play upon the words *cross* and *to cross*. The cross of Christ is

¹ In *The Great Mystery* alone II Corinthians IV:6 is quoted by Fox forty-nine times.

² i, 112:11-14; i, 282:18-23.

³ i, 22:8, 9; i, 57:7-11.

⁴ iii, 290:3.

⁵ iii, 138:11-13; vii, 122:30-34.

the power of God within that is in opposition to, or goes contrary to the evil human nature.⁶ In other words the cross within is little more than another synonym for the word or power within.⁷ There is not necessary or emphasized connection of the cross within with pain for either man or Christ. Fox talks about the suffering seed, which is that of God in man, oppressed and imprisoned by the evil of man:⁸ it is the "Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."⁹ But Fox does not connect the suffering seed with the cross within. Of course the suffering seed is Christ, and the cross within is Christ. But Fox does not connect these particular synonyms with each other, nor does the fact that the seed is sometimes described as suffering play any part in the regeneration or sanctification of man. The important thing is simply that before regeneration the seed is imprisoned, after regeneration it is free to rule and reign.¹⁰

There is an inescapable externality about the incident of Jesus' death at Jerusalem, which Fox cannot fit with logical ease into his general belief in the inwardness of all that is necessary for salvation. He is happier in his discarding of the outward administration of the sacraments. There he can point out

⁶ vii, 66:9-67:22.

⁷ i, 143:13-144:22; iii, 289:31-290:4; iii, 311:8-13.

⁸ vii, 104:6-18.

⁹ iii, 268:31-269:27.

¹⁰ vii, 102:31-43. Although Fox speaks of the death of the historical Jesus as "the blood shed upon the cross for the sins of the whole world," iii, 268:42, 43, it is an inheritance from the past rather than part of his thought. The death of the historical Jesus plays no real part in his scheme of salvation. On the other hand the belief in the importance of Christ's death at Jerusalem is not discarded from Fox's personal religion.

that "the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal," and that the scripture does not speak of sacramental water, but that it does speak of the baptism of the spirit. In claiming that there is no necessity for the outward administration of the Lord's Supper, his argument is that the bread and wine were to "shew the Lord's death till he come," but that Christ at his resurrection did come into the hearts of Christians, and so the outward administration is no longer needed.¹¹

But to attempt to reduce Fox's thought to merely a coherent system is to misrepresent him. His fully rounded religious belief is much more Christian than is an isolation of his central contentions. There are two reasons for this. One is that he grew up in a Christian community and inherited the Christian tradition. The other is that, in spite of his lack of historical perspective,¹² and in spite of his attempt to rely wholly upon immediate experience, he held that his personal revelation was fully consistent with the revelation that had come to men in the past.¹³ The alternative belief, that he had received a new and different revelation, would have been difficult to hold because of his emphasis upon the universality and changelessness of the light,¹⁴ and because of his further theory that this light is unmodified by the

¹¹ iii, 50:40-51:23; iii, 271:35-272:40.

¹² Fox was uneducated, and apparently knew none of the history of the times between the close of the New Testament period and the persecutions of "Bloody Mary," and so he does not see the apparent inconsistency in declaring both that the world was in darkness for fourteen hundred years and that the light is universal.

¹³ iii, 63:36-42.

¹⁴ vii, 33:22-28; vii, 50:4, 5; vii, 62:24-34; vii, 64:39-43; vii, 86:28-34; vii, 125:2-26; vii, 158:27-30.

human medium,¹⁵ and is also not without intellectual content.¹⁶

The great connection of Fox's teaching with historical Christianity lies in the place the Bible occupies in his thought. Both Puritanism and Fox claimed to know, by direct inspiration, that the scripture had all been written under divine revelation.¹⁷ They differed in that Puritanism believed that the direct inspiration to man thereafter only extended far enough to give the necessary "saving understanding of such things as are revealed in the word," and that men are dependent upon "a due use of the ordinary means" to learn things necessary for salvation as expressed in scripture.¹⁸ Fox, on the other hand, believed that direct revelation continued, and made it possible for the saints to interpret scripture correctly, and led them "into all truth."¹⁹ Fox believed that Puritanism, by making the scripture the final authority for faith and conduct; put bounds to the Holy Ghost and said that it should reveal no more.²⁰

But Fox's discarding of the scripture as guide in faith and doctrine is actually less than appears at first glance. Fox's theory of direct inspiration frees him from fears that his interpretation may be wrong,²¹ and frees him from the feeling of need to

¹⁵ iii, 62:20-28; iii, 84:1-12; iii, 445:8-17.

¹⁶ iii, 283:19-30.

¹⁷ *Westminster Confession*, Chap. i, section v.

¹⁸ *Westminster Confession*, Chap. i, sections i, ii, vi, vii.

¹⁹ iii, 35:13-22; iii, 40:26-41:5; iii, 63:37-43; iii, 157:42, 43; iii, 276:3-15; iii, 415:13-19.

²⁰ iii, 111:28-112:6.

²¹ " . . . that Divine Spirit which would lead them into all truth, and which I infallibly knew would never deceive any." *Stereotype Journal* (Philadelphia), p. 74:1, 2.

hunt in legalistic fashion for chapter and verse to prove every assertion that he makes. He believes that he is inspired not only with certain principles of conduct but also with special divine instructions for regulating the day by day putting of those principles into practice.²² He claims that he is in the same spirit the Apostles were in, and that his own revelations are as direct and infallible as theirs.²³ But as far as I know Fox never actually claims that the direct inspiration has revealed to him any religious beliefs, doctrines, or principles that he thinks are not recorded in the Bible. Certainly Fox never claims that the direct inspiration has revealed anything to him that supersedes New Testament teaching.²⁴

It is not by chance that Fox thinks of the direct revelation that he receives as being the same as the direct revelation that the Apostles received. It could scarcely be otherwise with his doctrine of the light. The light, according to Fox, is not a divine inspiration that inspires him, Fox, and also inspired the earthly Jesus. Fox identifies the light with the pre-existent Christ, and he identifies the pre-existent Christ with the historical Jesus. Jesus was the pre-existent Christ with a human body (the seed of Abraham according to the flesh). Jesus did not have a human nature for the human is earthy. Fox's view inclines to Apollinarianism with a tendency to Sabellianism.²⁵ Fox's heretical view on this subject

²² i, 15, 16; i, 57:22, 23; i, 59:9, 10; i, 182:32, 33; i, 198:34-38; i, 342:19-29.

²³ iii, 76:14-26; iii, 237:38-238:13; vii, 154:14-24.

²⁴ iii, 63:37-43.

²⁵ iii, 139:42-140:2; iii, 396:35-43; iii, 555:13, 14.

at least serves the useful purpose of closely defining the light, and of constantly emphasizing its supernaturalness. The light that lighteth every man is not some vague divine illumination, but the indwelling of the pre-existent Christ whose earthly life is recorded in the Gospels.²⁶

Furthermore, it has been pointed out, in discussing Fox's idea of the light as that which brings into unity, that Fox has the mystic craving for that which changeth not. The light does not change. The light is Christ. Christ is yesterday and today and forever the same. If the light, Christ, revealed in George Fox something at variance with Christ's relation to the Apostles, the light would be inconsistent with itself. Or if there was no obvious inconsistency, but the revelation to George Fox superseded the revelation to the Apostles, then there would be development and so a change in the light.²⁷ If the light is to satisfy Fox's craving for that which changeth not it must reveal to Fox as it revealed to the Prophets and Apostles. This Fox claimed that it did.²⁸ He claimed that he and the other Quakers were in the same spirit that the Prophets and Apostles were in.²⁹ There is much truth in George Keith's remark that Quakerism is not a "new revelation of new things," but a "new revelation of the good old things."³⁰

The insistence that the Quakers are in the same

²⁶ vii, 122:30-36.

²⁷ "And the word of God cannot be altered, and the word of God cannot change; man may alter, but the word of God cannot be altered, but abides and lives for ever." iii, 327:4-6.

²⁸ iii, 63:36-42; vii, 154:14-24.

²⁹ iii, 91:22-31; iii, 237:39-238:13; vii, 154:15-21.

³⁰ George Keith, *Immediate Revelation Not Ceased* (London, 1675), pp. 3, 4.

spirit that the Apostles were in is closely connected with Fox's belief that Quakerism was reestablishing Apostolic Christianity. From one point of view Fox's claim that the early church lived in the direct guidance of the light and spirit, and that in Quakerism real, that is Apostolic, Christianity was returning is simply one answer to the seventeenth century problem of what Apostolic Christianity was like, and how religion in England could be made to conform to it.³¹

Fox counsels reading the Bible and he himself had unusual familiarity with it even in a generation that almost idolized the scriptures.³² In his youth he used to take the Bible and walk abroad in solitary places and read and meditate upon it.³³ He not only quotes it constantly in his writings, but he couches much of his teaching in its terms and takes most of his symbolism from it. The *light*, *word*, *seed*, *anointing*, *spirit of truth* are all Biblical terms. Fox first saturated his mind with the Bible and then gave forth as direct revelation thoughts that came without effort to his mind when he waited quietly upon God.³⁴ Many of his pronouncements are really slight variations of passages of scripture.³⁵ This extensive use of the Bible has of itself a conservative effect, and helps in linking Fox with historical Christianity. A new teaching worded in a patchwork of Bible

³¹ The following are examples of Fox's emphasis upon the normative value of the Apostolic: iii, 71:22-31; iii, 82:38-42; iii, 87:30-35; iii, 96:43-97:3; iii, 101:31-34; iii, 102:24-26; iii, 105:35-38; iii, 106:23-34; iii, 109:30; iii, 113:9-26, 38; iii, 135:32.

³² i, 69:13-19; i, 46:13-21; i, 156:35, 36; i, 212:1-24.

³³ *Stereotype Journal* (Philadelphia), p. 59:51-53.

³⁴ i, 46:13-21; *Stereotype Journal* (Philadelphia), p. 73:40-43.

³⁵ For example see vii, 57:22-40.

verses will be nearer to historical Christianity than the same general teaching would be in a new vocabulary, because the verses, even in their new setting and interpretation, carry to the first converts some associations with the older ideas, and will make later generations of the sect find a return to orthodoxy easier because of the common vocabulary. There is nothing esoteric in Fox's teaching.

Another mark of Fox's conservatism is that he interprets the Bible without resorting to allegory. He does not assume that the story has a hidden meaning, and then interpret and apply the hidden meaning to the contemporary situation. It is his policy to take the meaning of scripture at what he considers to be its face value.³⁶ This is very much in line with the plain direct yea-nay honesty that he advocates.³⁷

Fox quoted the Bible when he preached.³⁸ Often he mentions having a Bible with him on such occasions.³⁹ On some occasions when he preached he

³⁶ Note that Fox does not allegorize the Garden of Eden story. See *The Journal of George Fox* (Cambridge, 1911), vol. ii, p. 236:2-13; iii, 553:20-34; vii, 17:28-36. Winstanley and the Familists seem to have treated the Scripture allegorically. See Lewis H. Berens, *The Digger Movement in the Days of the Commonwealth* (London, 1906), pp. 16, 43, 44.

³⁷ For an example of the temperamental downrightness of Fox's honesty see iii, 425:7-9. As somewhat of an exception to the claim that Fox does not allegorize it should be said that there is a tendency to allegorize Cain, Abel, Balaam, Core, Sarah, Hagar, Jacob, and Esau to the extent of taking them as types. But as these Old Testament characters are taken in a typical sense in the New Testament, Fox's taking them as types is not a figurative use but a literal following of the New Testament figurative use. The remark about the woman learning in silence, I *Timothy* II:11, 12, Fox finds it convenient to interpret allegorically as the church learning in silence from Christ; but this is an exception. And compare vii, 89:36-38 with *Ephesians* V:22-24.

³⁸ i, 57:30-32; i, 154:29-36; i, 155:1-39.

³⁹ i, 282:3, 4; i, 340:35-37.

took the Bible and showed the congregation chapter and verse references for the Quaker practice and principles.⁴⁰ On one occasion a man, who had heard the Quaker message and was perplexed, asked Fox to give him Bible references so that he could confute opponents, and Fox complied as a matter of course.⁴¹ Fox refers to such instances as *opening the scripture*, which is the same term that the *Westminster Confession* uses for elucidating the Bible.⁴²

The seventeenth century religious problem was not so much whether a personal God exists, as it was how shall men serve him in order to be saved.⁴³ Fox inherited the belief in God, and he inherited the problem of how men shall serve him.

Although Fox believed that he had been taught not by man but by direct divine revelation, he nevertheless possessed a large amount of the Christian tradition by inheritance. In spite of Fox's refusing on principle to accept the Apostles' Creed as an authoritative creed,⁴⁴ he nevertheless believed all the clauses of the creed except the one on the resurrection of the body.⁴⁵ And in spite of denying the

⁴⁰ i, 46:13-21; i, 166:8-18.

⁴¹ i, 280:41-281:12.

⁴² *Westminster Confession*, Chap. i, section vii; i, 341:1-4.

⁴³ There seems to have been only one occasion, and that of only some minutes duration, when Fox doubted the existence of God. *Stereotype Journal* (Philadelphia), p. 68:6-17.

⁴⁴ iii, 99:22-31; iii, 423:5-8. A creed would belong to the mere knowledge about which is out of the power. Besides, Fox denies that the Apostles' Creed is apostolic.

⁴⁵ For passages bearing on the relation of Fox's thought to various articles of the Apostles' Creed see i, 13:33 14:7; i, 28:35; i, 57:6, 7; i, 174:23-32; i, 206:13-21; iii, 44-53; iii, 55:20-26; iii, 89:21-25; iii, 94:44-95:8; iii, 112:1-6; iii, 133:33-42; iii, 138:1-3, 19-25; iii, 140:3-8; iii, 145:42-146:9; iii, 188:12-18; iii, 305:44-306:5; iii, 337-346; vii, 28:5, 6; vii, 38:29-33; vii, 45:34-39; vii, 56:12-20; vii, 58:6-13; vii, 67:15; vii, 87:5, 6; vii, 122:30-37; vii, 131:41; vii, 154:14-24; vii, 275:26-30; *Stereotype Journal* (Philadelphia), pp. 58,

Trinity as unscriptural,⁴⁶ he did believe in the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.⁴⁷ In fact, Fox's belief in the light is in some respects a reaffirmation of a belief in the Holy Spirit.⁴⁸ The extent to which the simple outline of Christian belief lies taken for granted at the back of his thought can be seen in Fox's account of a conversation that he had with an Indian chief. Here Fox is explaining the essentials of Christianity in an entirely uncontroversial fashion to a non-Christian.

“And on the twenty-ninth of the ninth month I went among the Indians. There was their young king and others of their chief men, and they were very loving, and received what I said to them. And I showed them that God made all things in six days, and made but one man and one woman, and how that God did drown the old world because of their wickedness; and so along to Christ; and how that he did die for

63:32-36; 68; *Cambridge Journal* (Cambridge, 1911), vol. ii, pp. 12:6-34; 129:12-18; *To All That Would Know the Way to the Kingdom* (*Works*, Philadelphia, 1831), vol. iv, pp. 18, 19; also (*Works*, Philadelphia, 1831), vol. vi, p. 218. Fox thinks of the church as the “communion of saints.” On the article “descended into hell” Fox is in line with the *Westminster Confession* rather than with the *Thirty-nine Articles*. Fox's idea of the “forgiveness of sins” is the forsaking of sin, the cleansing from it, the blotting it out, the saving from sin.

⁴⁶ iii, 397:4, 5.

⁴⁷ iii, 555:11.

⁴⁸ Chap. ii; iii, 261:32, 33 and iii, 409:38 and vii, 71:42, 43 compare iii, 555:13, 14; iii, 261:32-36 compare i, 282:6, 7; vii, 62:40, 41 compare i, 142:37-143:1; iii, 307:29, 30 compare iii, 373:8-10; iii, 88:23, 24 compare iii, 67:18-22; iii, 52:42-53:2 and vii, 123:7,8 and iii, 49:31-33 and iii, 49:25-29 and iii, 341:16, 17 and vii, 141:33-38 and iii, 441:37-39 compare iii, 396:35-43 and iii, 139:42-140:2; iii, 151:30 and vii, 53:28-30 compare iii, 47:20-23; iii, 49:17-21 and vii, 123:23-26 and vii, 125:19 compare iii, 463:37-43; vii, 158:34-36 compare i, 56:39 and *Stereotype Journal* (Philadelphia), p. 74:19-22. See also i, 142:37-143:1; iii, 69:8, 9; iii, 397:4, 5, 7; iii, 555:11.

all and for their sins, and did enlighten them, and if they did do evil he would burn them, and if they did do well, they should not be burned. Then I went back, which was about two miles by water and land, to the house that I came from."⁴⁹

In teaching the conception of the light as that which shows a man evil and that in which is unity, the two definitions are seen by which Fox drew his religion away from external authority, and found an authority for his religion (which was by inheritance the Christian religion) in the nature of human experience. In more specifically Christian fashion he also says often that the light shows you Christ,⁵⁰ the light leads you to Christ,⁵¹ and the light shows you scripture.⁵² Fox's central teaching is connected with historical Christianity by his belief that the light shows him that the scriptures are divinely inspired, and by his identification of the light with the pre-existent Christ, who is also the historical Jesus. Many times in the *Journal*, in describing his preaching he says that he "directed them to their teacher Christ Jesus,"⁵³ "and they that were convinced came under Christ's teaching, and were settled upon him, their foundation and their rock."⁵⁴

⁴⁹ *The Journal of George Fox* (Cambridge, 1911), vol. ii, p. 236:2-13. I have modernized the spelling and punctuation. The incident occurred in 1672, during Fox's trip to America. This is twelve years later than the period we are studying, but it is the first chance we have to see the teachings of Fox against a non-Christian background.

⁵⁰ i, 27:39, 40; i, 112:41-113:10.

⁵¹ vii, 33:20-28.

⁵² i, 26:20-22; i, 27:39, 40; i, 55:30, 31.

⁵³ i, 22:8, 9; i, 23:35-37; i, 112:12, 13; i, 166:14-16; i, 258:31-33.

⁵⁴ i, 195:25-27; i, 296:20, 21.

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